BEETLE JUICE

Screenplay

by

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based on a story by

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A Pecos Production

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EXT: WINTER RIVER CONNECTICUT - DAY

A bucolic New England town, but rather too clean and neat to be entirely real.

Ominous, vibrating music.

The camera, flying over downtown and several different neighborhoods, sweeps over a rickety bridge crossing a rapidly flowing stream, and then up a hill to a large, imposing Victorian house. The house stands alone on this prominence, overlooking the rest of the town. The camera lingers.

SUDDENNLY A GIANT DADDY LONGLEGS SPIDER --

mounts the crest of the hill behind the house, pauses for a moment, and then starts to climb over the Victorian house in a very menacing manner.

ADAM (v.o.)
You're a big fellow.

A HAND --

perfectly stupendous -- reaches down out of the sky, lies flat, palm up, in the yard next to the house, and the Daddy Longlegs climbs into it. The hand rises into the sky again.

INT: ATTIC AND MINIATURE TOWN - DAY

A new angle reveals Winter River CT as a miniature town, and the Daddy Longlegs and the hand holding it are perfectly normal in size.

The hand belongs to ADAM MAITLAND, a tax accountant in his early 40s. He looks tired, but happy in an I've-just-come-through-the-other-side-of-hell sort of way.

ADAM and the miniature town are in an attic room of a Victorian house. The attic roof slopes on either side, and there are a couple of windows, quite small and low down toward the floor at either end of the long room. Almost the entire space is taken up by the miniature town. A single door leads to a landing and staircase to the lower part of the house.

This door opens and ADAM's wife BARBARA appears. She is near her husband's age, and very pretty. She is a witty, sexy, engaging woman, though she has a fault. She is the type of person who is always on to the next thing, and gets frustrated when things don't work the way she's planned them.

BARBARA is carrying two large manila envelopes, which are filled with thickly-stuffed white envelopes -- tax returns.

BARBARA
These tax returns have to be postmarked in the next hour, Adam. So let's go. Let's hurry.

ADAM
I wish I had more time to spend up here. I haven't been up here since Christmas. Spiders and dust. If we weren't going away --

BARBARA
Don't <u>breathe</u> those words. <u>Nothing</u> is going to stop us from going to Hawaii.

ADAM
(Continuing his thought peacefully) -- I'd have the time to get this town back in shape.

ADAM turns off the lamp that acts as sun to the miniature WINTER RIVER. It's actually set up on a kind of mechanism that imitates the movement of the sun across the sky.

EXT: THE HOUSE - DAY

The Victorian house from the model "in the flesh". It's ADAM and BARBARA's. They're getting into the car out front, BARBARA driving.

On the bumper of the car is a sticker reading: WARNING: I BRAKE FOR ANIMALS.

INT: THE CAR - DAY

BARBARA takes off with a screech of tires. ADAM is peacefully looking through the manila envelopes.

ADAM
(Dreamily) For an accountant, April 15th is the worst day of the year. April 16th is the best.

BARBARA
(No nonsense) We have to stop by Jane's. She hasn't signed her form

yet. And we can pick up the tickets. We were going to have to do that anyway.

EXT: THE RIVER AND BRIDGE AND HILL - DAY

We see the car coming down the hill toward the bridge.

ADAM (v.o.)
You're so anxious to get away. I'd be happy just to stay at home --

BARBARA (v.o.)
The way we always do? Adam, I've never been west of --

The car reaches the bridge, which is very rickety. The car seems to bob up and down on every plank, and so loudly that ADAM and BARBARA can't even talk.

EXT: DOWNTOWN WINTER RIVER - DAY

Just like the model, but real. And populated.

Camera pausses on a storefront with a painted window reading:

JANE BUTTERFIELD
ANTIQUES
REAL ESTATE
TRAVEL

ADAM and BARBARA's car is parked out front. On the car next to theirs is a bumper sticker reading: WARNING: I SPEED UP IN ORDER TO RUN DOWN CUTE FURRY ANIMALS.

We hear a woman's blood-curdling scream. It's JANE's scream from inside the store.

INT: ANTIQUE STORE REAL ESTATE OFFICE TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

The store is bursting with antiques of all sorts, racks with travel brochures, boards with photographs of houses for sale, and of course a big serve-yourself Xerox machine with a hand-lettered sign reading COPIES 8c. A five-year-old girl who can hardly reach the machine is xeroxing a large order of some sort.

JANE BUTTERFIELD is a tall, nervous woman, who looks as if she's divorced three husbands and buried another for good measure. She's ruthless but in her own weird way, quite

pleasant.

JANE
I can't believe it! Adam, how could you do this to me?

ADAM
Jane, you can't claim one-night-stands as dependents. And you can't take depreciation on your own body. The IRS catches things like that. I know those people.

JANE
The government is eating me up. The government wants to shut down my business. Washington is jealous of my efficiency.

BARBARA
Sign, Jane. Make out a check. And then give us our tickets.

As JANE reluctantly signs and writes a check:

JANE
Just do me a favor while you're gone.

ADAM
What?

JANE
Leave me the keys to your house. Let me sell it for you while you're gone. Go to Hawaii, lie on the beach, get burned, eat pig, smell flowers, then come back and let me give you a check for two hundred and fifty thousand --

ADAM
Jane --

JANE
Three hundred thousand. Four. I'll put it in the Sunday Times Magazine. Sell the next day. Half a million dollars. Some lawyer from New York will snap it up in two minutes. You'll be able to retire, Adam. No more April 15th to worry about. No more --

XEROX GIRL
Shut up!

And strangely enough, JANE does.

CUT TO:

EXT: POST OFFICE - DAY

POST OFFICE sign reads: WINTER RIVER CT 06854

BARBARA and ADAM'S car pulls up to a curbside box, and BARBARA shovels in all the tax returns. She wipes her hands clean of the whole business, and even before she pulls back inside, the car takes off towards home.

INT: THE CAR - DAY

Going towards home, and towards the bridge.

BARBARA
Maybe we should.

ADAM
Should what?

BARBARA
Let Jane sell the house.

ADAM just stares at her.

ADAM
No.

BARBARA
It's so big. It really ought to belong to people who have children. I've lived in that house all my life. I want something different. I want --

She screams and points.

A dog has just run out into the path of the car, and is staring stupidly at the approaching vehicle.

ADAM applies brakes and swerves violently to avoid hitting the animal.

EXT: BRIDGE and RIVER - DAY

The dog ambles out of the way, but the smashes into the side of the rickety bridge. It hovers a moment on the edge.

INT: THE CAR - DAY

A piling has smashed through the window on the passenger side, crushing the upper part of BARBARA's arm. She is wailing in pain and fright.

ADAM attempts everything at once. He tries to help BARBARA. He tries to get out of the car to save his own skin. He attempts to maneuver the car onto the bridge again. None of this succeeds.

The car rocks back and forth a moment, and then slides forward toward the water.

EXT: CAR AND BRIDGE

The car plunges into the rushing water. It floats for a moment, and then sinks like a stone.

UNDERWATER - DAY

The car floats downward with panic-stricken ADAM and BARBARA inside. For a moment we hear their screams, then as the car fills up with water, the screams are cut off.

FADE TO BLACK

INT: BARBARA AND ADAM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Quiet, still, expectant. There is a fire laid in the hearth. Suddenly and for no apparent reason it ignites and burns with a furious cheerfulness.

BARBARA and ADAM enter, dazed, wet, and bedraggled.

BARBARA
Something like this <u>always</u> happens when we try to get away. <u>Always</u>.

ADAM leads her toward the fire.

ADAM
You'll feel better when you're dry.

He holds out his hands to be warmed. BARBARA comes up beside him. All this time she's been holding her injured arm with the other hand.

BARBARA
This fire wasn't burning when we left the house.

ADAM
How's your arm?

BARBARA
I'm not sure. It feels frozen.

She holds her arms out to warm them.

BARBARA'S LEFT ARM.--

slowly slides out of the sleeve of her coat and plunges into the fire.

ADAM and BARBARA stare at it dumbfoundedly before ADAM regains his senses and snatches it out of the fire. Two of the fingers are burning like candles, and BARBARA industriously blows them out.

CUT TO:

INT: LIVING ROOM: A FEW MINUTES LATER - DAY

ADAM and BARBARA are sitting on the couch together. BARBARA is looking away slightly -- as one does when a doctor is drawing blood -- while ADAM tries to reattach her arm. He's a little unsure of the procedure, since he's never had to do it before.

ADAM
I don't think we survived that crash.

BARBARA
That means Hawaii is out, doesn't it?

ADAM gets up, a little absently, and wanders to the front door. He peers out.

ADAM
Do you remember how we got back up here?

BARBARA tests her arm by turning it in the shoulder socket.

She clenches and unclenches her fist. They work fine.

BARBARA
Works.

ADAM opens the door and steps out onto the front porch.

EXT: FRONT PORCH - TWILIGHT

A gorgeous sunset. ADAM's face is painted with the color. He stands at the top of the steps leading down to the front yard. BARBARA stands just inside the open threshold, looking out worriedly.

BARBARA
(Quiet sarcasm) The end of a perfect day.

ADAM starts to step down to the yard.

BARBARA
I might have known that an accountant would die on April Fif --

He steps off the last step into the yard and promptly disappears.

BARBARA
Adam!

EXT: THE GREAT VOID

ADAM is nowhere. There's no ground, no sky, nothing to stand on or hold onto or give boundaries or distance. Just vast nothing. Not white and not colored either. Noise of a clock ticking.

ADAM looks about in surprise, and doesn't like what he doesn't see. He turns right around to head back up the steps.

There are no steps.

ADAM
Barbara?

He runs off a little in the distance, and calls again from over there.

ADAM
(Quietly) Where are you, darling?

He goes even farther away.

IN THE FOREGROUND --

an enormous geared wheel -- the size of a man -- rolls by, tearing up the unseamed ground. Something pours up out of the tear -- ooze or stuffing.

ADAM runs forward and stares after the wheel, which is now out of sight.

TWO SMALLER GEARS --

looking like very much like components of a giant watch -- spin along behind him. One of them veers suddenly towards him, and though ADAM jumps out of the way, the gear snags his trouser leg and shreds it.

A PERFECTLY ENORMOUS GEAR --

comes barrelling towards him. ADAM leaps out of its way. The gear turns, fish-tailing, kicking up ooze and stuffing.

ADAM he flings himself suddenly to the right, but trips into the path of the gear. As he's about to be crushed, he's suddenly jerked up to safety.

EXT: FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

It's BARBARA who's grabbed him, and quite evidently saved his -- not life, perhaps -- but existence. He's shaken, breathless.

BARBARA stares at him, as if wondering what he's just been through.

ADAM
(Weakly) You saved my - uh - something.

BARBARA
Two hours.

ADAM
What?

BARBARA
That's how long you were gone.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

BARBARA leads ADAM into the house.

ADAM
Anything happen while I was away?

BARBARA
I made a couple of small discoveries.

She is standing in front of the mirror over the hearth mantel. On the mantel is BARBARA's prize collection of porcelain horses. ADAM comes to stand beside her. They look into the mirror, and there is no reflection of them.

BARBARA picks up one of the horses, and trots it through the air. The horse <u>is</u> imaged in the mirror.

BARBARA
There's that, and there's this.

She picks up a book that's sitting on the mantel. It's about the size and heft of the Boy Scout Manual.

CU: Its title is HANDBOOK FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED.

BARBARA
I don't know where it came from.

INT: BEDROOM - NIGHT

ADAM is already in bed, reading from the Handbook. BARBARA is walking about the room, getting ready for bed. It's evident that they're going through a ritual of sorts that they practiced every night of their married lives.

BARBARA
I don't like situations like this. I hate it when I'm not in control. So just tell me the basics.

ADAM
This book isn't arranged that way. What do you want to know?

BARBARA
There are a thousand things we want to know. Is this a punishment? Or is it a reward? Are we halfway to heaven or are we halfway to hell? Why did you disappear when you walked off the front porch? And how long is it going to last? That's

for starters.

BARBARA kicks their suitcases, standing packed by the door.

BARBARA (Cont)
I knew I'd never get to Hawaii.

BARBARA is standing inside the open closet door. As ADAM talks, she glances at her non-reflection in tthe mirror. She touches the surface of the mirror, and her eyes go wide as her hand penetrates the surface.

ADAM
This book reads like the Tax Code. I don't see anything about "Rewards and Punishments" or "Heaven and Hell." Wait, maybe this is something, under "Geographical and Temporal Perimeters." (Reading) "Functional perimeters vary from manifestation to manifestation." It really does sound like the IRS had a hand in this.

He looks up but BARBARA is nowhere to be seen in the rooom.

ADAM
Barbara! Where --

The closet door swings slowly open, so that the full-length mirror inside the door is directly facing ADAM in bed.

But it's not ADAM who's reflected, holding the Handbook on top of the covers, it's BARBARA.

ADAM
How did you get in there?

BARBARA
I walked through. It's easy.

ADAM
What's it like?

INT: BEDROOM IN MIRROR - NIGHT

The bedroom is reversed, but there are other things different too. The room just fades out on the edges, and beyond is the great void that ADAM was in earlier.

BARBARA begins to feel frightened. She peers at her side of the mirror and sees ADAM in bed on the other side. The image

is dark and fading -- as if the door between the two worlds were closing off.

BARBARA
It's --

The mirror grows darker.

On all sides of her the walls of the room fade away entirely. The room tilts, and the furniture slides away into the void.

At the last possible moment, BARBARA bolts through the mirror back into the real world.

INT: THE REAL BEDROOM - NIGHT

ADAM looks at his wife. BARBARA is shaken.

ADAM
The handbook discourages that sort of experimentation. Trans-dimensional instabilities, whatever that means.

BARBARA
I've got a pretty good idea.

EXT: TRAVEL AGENCY WINDOW - DAY

JANE BUTTERFIELD is squeezed in the window, putting up a new photograph on the board of Available Properties of Distinction. It's ADAM and BARBARA's house.

The fit in the window is so tight that JANE gets stuck. In trying to get out, she slips, and falls sideways, and is caught even more securely. Two children stand in front of the window passively watching her distress.

JANE
Help! Help!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT: ATTIC AND MODEL TOWN - DAY

The model town looks to be thriving. ADAM's obviously had plenty of time for his hobby lately.

Right now, ADAM is setting up a small monument in the town cemetery. It reads ADAM AND BARBARA MAITLAND / UNITED IN LIFE / UNDIVIDED IN DEATH.

BARBARA's moving about, a little nervously.

ADAM
Cabin fever?

BARBARA
Why don't they tell us something? Where are all the other dead people in the world? Why is it just you and me?

ADAM
I don't know why you're asking me. Maybe this is heaven.

BARBARA
In heaven there wouldn't be stains on the wallpaper.

ADAM
This is fine with me. As long as I never have to worry about May Fifteenth again.

BARBARA
April fifteenth.

ADAM
I'm sorry about Hawaii, though.

BARBARA
I keep having this feeling that something is going to <u>happen</u>.

Noises off. ADAM and BARBARA look at one another.

CUT TO:

INT: ADAM AND BARBARA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

JANE BUTTERFIELD slams through the kitchen door into the living room, in the midst of a house-selling spiel. The house looks different now, as if it hasn't been entered -- much less lived-in -- in months. Forlorn, clammy, unkempt.

JANE
... eight months ago. I was devastated. I saw them not five minutes before it happened. Truly terrible. I had to go to my IRS audit myself. They crucified me.

The house --

She has been followed through by a Jewish couple in late-middle age, who stare around themselves in open-mouthed astonishment.

JEWISH WIFE
(Whispering) Look at this wallpaper, Harry

JEWISH HUSBAND
(Not whispering) Goyishe kopf.

JEWISH WIFE
(Whispering) Must be velvet. (To JANE, with a fake smile) So gorgeous.

JANE
Oh, good, I'm so glad you liked it. I helped Barbara pick it out... We were the closest friends imaginable.

Her voice fades out as she and the Jewish couple disappear up the stairs.

ADAM and BARBARA are sitting in the living room.

ADAM
Eight months?

BARBARA
Time's different. Hadn't you noticed?

ADAM
Everything's different.

INT: BEDROOM - MORNING

ADAM and BARBARA in bed asleep.

BARBARA's eyes fly open, and she's instantly awake, though unmoving. She evidently feels something. Her mouth opens and she starts to say "Adam" but before she does so the door of the room flies open, and a dozen people surge into the bedroom.

Gypsies. Degenerate father, prematurely wizened mother, old grandmother in drooling dotage, floozey pregnant daughter, gigolo son, hordes of children. And behind them, JANE, giving blithely forth:

JANE
This is the master bedroom suite consisting of a bedroom of dimensions approximately fifteen by thirteen feet, two boxed window-seats, two large walk-in closets with full-length beveled mirrors, a third linen closet, a full bath with --

BARBARA and ADAM are no longer in the bed, but the gypsies, on the other hand, are everywhere. Jumping on the bed, playing a screeching game of hide-and-seek, making long tears in the wallpaper, swinging on the doors, making faces in the mirrors. The older members of the group occupy themselves with purloining anything that can be secreted on their persons. JANE apparently notices none of this.

JANE
-- original brass fixtures. This entire house, in fact, is replete with extras and amenities. Now, if you will all just step this way, we will --

Gradually the tide runs out again, and the room is left empty and scarred.

An armchair with hassock both turn smoothly around of their own accord. ADAM is sitting in the chair with his feet crossed on the hassock. He looks around for his wife but doesn't see her.

The bottom drawer of the bureau opens, and BARBARA rises straight up out of it. She's furious about the intrusion.

ADAM
If this house is supposed to be going for half a million dollars, why the hell is she showing it off to a band of gypsies?

BARBARA
I'm going to show them a few extras and amenities.

She's suddenly holding the handbook. She starts leafing through.

BARBARA
God, why doesn't this thing make sense?

EXT: HOUSE - DAY

A winter's day. Snow on the ground.

Two vehicles pull up. Out of the first, a large green Cadillac, steps JANE. Out of the second, a red baby Toyota pickup, step two large men dressed in full black leather.

JANE
Absolutely the best deal in Connecticut.

LEATHER MAN #1
Prove it.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

JANE leading the two leathermen, who look very ominous indeed.

JANE
... five bedrooms, two and one-half baths. Two walk-in closets on this floor alone. Seven more regular-sized. A sewing room, a --

LEATHER MAN #1
Do you believe this wallpaper? I can't believe this wallpaper.

LEATHER MAN #2
Check out one of the bedrooms.

LEATHER MAN #1 flings open the door nearest him.

LEATHER MAN #1'S POV --

A normal guest room. A moment of calm, then...

BARBARA --

explodes out of the wallpapered wall, screaming bloody murder. She runs right up to LEATHER MAN #1, grasps her temples, and tears off her face, leaving nothing but muscle and bone beneath. Her eyeballs dangle on her cheeks.

BACK TO SCENE

LEATHER MAN #1 draws the door closed, unperturbed by the ghoulish apparition, which he didn't even see.

LEATHER MAN #1
The wallpaper's worse in there.

LEATHER MAN #2
It couldn't be.

EXT: YARD: ADAM'S POV - DAY

ADAM is looking out of a window on the second-floor.

The LEATHERMEN, looking very much as if they think the house is the pits, are climbing back into their truck.

JANE
(Desperate) I can arrange the most creative financing in the six states of New England. I'm known for it. Give me eight thousand dollars and a lien on that truck and the place is yours.

The LEATHERMEN have already driven off.

INT: GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

ADAM turns away from the window. BARBARA, still with her face unattached, is fuming. She's trying to rip apart the handbook.

BARBARA
What's the good of being a ghost if you can't frighten people to death?

She flings the handbook at the mirror on the wall. It flies through on the other side and bursts into flame.

ADAM
When living people are around, I feel myself fading away.

BARBARA
I'm not putting up with this.

She storms out of the room.

INT: KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

BARBARA storms in, as if straight from the room upstairs. She heads straight for the back door. Just as she reaches

for the door, ADAM comes in.

ADAM
Don't go out there. We don't know --

BARBARA
I can't stay inside this house a minute more. Not one minute.

She flings open the door and steps outside. She promptly disappears.

ADAM
Barbara!

EXT: THE SURFACE OF SATURN'S MOON TITAN - DAY

BARBARA is on Titan with an enormous Saturn looming in the sky. She looks around with wonder and some fear.

A sulfur volcano erupts in the distance.

A meteor crashes with a lurid explosion.

As from a great distance she hears ADAM's voice.

ADAM
Barbara!

She turns slowly in the dense sand that covers the surface of this distant moon.

BARBARA'S POV

ADAM is trudging towards her. Behind him, hovering isolated in the air, is the kitchen dooor.

BACK TO SCENE:

ADAM at last catches up with her.

ADAM
Well, you always did want to travel.

BARBARA
Shut up.

Behind them, something is burrowing rapidly towards them through the sand. The Something looks as if it might be right out of DUNE.

BARBARA and ADAM watch for a moment, and then realize that it just might be a very fine idea if they got the hell out of there. They turn and run towards the kitchen door.

The kitchen door has moved, but they veer in the new direction.

The Something gets right up to them and rises out of the sand. Whatever it is is very big, very nasty and very hungry.

ADAM and BARBARA slip and sink in the sand as they are pursued by the BEAST. They make it through the door just in time, swing it open and hurl themselves through.

The door shuts with a bang.

The BEAST rears and roars in frustration, howling to the ringed planet.

INT: KITCHEN

BARBARA, weeping, throws herself in ADAM's arms.

BARBARA
We're trapped in this house forever.

ADAM
Come on. We'll have some brandy. Spirits, get it?

BARBARA
(A tentative smile) Death hasn't improved your sense of humor.

They head for the dining room.

INT: DINING ROOM

ADAM has his arms around BARBARA's shoulder. They cross towards a bookcase near the foyer, where they keep a decanter of brandy.

ADAM
We'll be fine. I promise.

INT: LIVING ROOM

From here they have a clear annd straight-on view of the foyer through the open doorway.

ADAM
We just have to hope that Jane sells the house to someone nice.

AN OMINOUS RUUMBLE --

like a 4.0 earthquake shakes the house. Glass rattles, the ceramic horses on the mantelpiece jump around. BARBARA and ADAM look at one another with misgiving.
The rumble builds to a climax, there is a loud metallic squeal, and then a crash...

A MOVING VAN RAMP --

smashes open the front door and crashes down into the foyer.

BARBARA AND ADAM --

half expect a division of Marines to storm down the ramp but instead --

A TEN-FOOT ELECTRIC BLUE ITALIAN LEATHER COUCH --

slides smoothly down the ramp. On the couch sitts DELIA DEETZ.

DELIA is relentlessly New York, relentlessly fashionable, relentlessly thin -- a totally self-assured Joan Rivers.

She is also a woman with a mission -- to gut BARBARA and ADAM's house and remake it in her own very upscale image.

DELIA'S gaze is on the living room, but she looks through ADAM and BARBARA as if they weren't even there (which to her eyes they're not).

The couch crashes into the base of the staircase, smashing the newell post and several of the balusters. One of the balusters falls at DELIA's side. She grasps it like a scepter.

Two MOVING MEN rush down the ramp.

MOVING MAN #1
Sorry about that, Mrs. Deetz.

DELIA
Don't worry. It was going anyway.

Staggered by DELIA's grand entrance, BARBARA looks towards ADAM, but he has disappeared. Flustered, BARBARRA glances around the room, shakes herself expererimentally, then with a

look of surprise on her face that it works -- disappears herself.

Still holding the baluster, DELIA gets up off the couch and moves into the living room, surveying it with an odd mixture of ambition, contempt, and resolution.

Behind her, the two MOVING MEN bring in a matching blue leather armchair. In the armchair sits LYDIA DEETZ.

LYDIA is the nec plus ultra of whatatever is fashionable in sixteen year old SoHo girls. She has a couple of expensive cameras around her neck -- and is already taking photographs, of the MOVING MEN, rather than of the new house. LYDIA is cool, LYDIA is sullen, LYDIA is her father's daughter by his first marriage.

The MOVING MEN still hold up the chair, waiting for DELIA to decide where she wants it. LYDIA calmly surveys the house with a cold eye.

LYDIA
We gave up sixty-five hundred square feet of prime loft space on Prince Street for this?

DELIA
Shut up, Lydia. You're too young to comprehend fluctuations in the real estate market on a nationwide or even region-wide scale. This place was a fucking steal.

DELIA signals wearily that the MOVING MEN can put the chair down anywhere.

DELIA (cont)
Your first job is to get all this other crap out of here.

LYDIA hops down out of the chair, and comes farther into the living room.

LYDIA
Jesus. Who lived here? Norman Rockwell?

DELIA
Where is Charles?

LYDIA
Checking out the kitchen.

That's the cue for CHARLES DEETZ, who comes in through the swinging door, and across the dining room. He's holding a butcher knife in one hand, and a massive meat cleaver in the other.

CHARLES is not exactly the equivalent of his wife, being at heart a basically pleasant man. But pleasantt isn't in this year, and CHARLES does his best to be off-handed and brittle.

CHARLES
Only things in the whole damn kitchen worth saving. You wouldn't believe the kind of junk these people ate. White bread. Iceberg lettuce. Bottled salad dressing. They probably died of gastronomic boredom.

At the front door, the fourth membber of the DEETZ family climbs over the moving ramp. This is CATHY DEETZ, nine years old. She is dressed totally SoHo, but there's something off about the outfit -- as if she's not quite comfortable with the look. She gazes around the living room with obvious pleasure.

CATHY
A real house. It's totally great. I can't believe it.

CHARLES
You really like this place, don't you honey?

CATHY
You bet.

LYDIA
You're such a weenie.

A VIOLENT FALSETTO SCREAM turns the DEETZ family's attention to the front windows.

OTHO (os)
HELP!

Caught in the window frame is a massive body, wedged at the waist. The short, stubby legs, dressed in the world's largest pair of Georgio Armani slacks, protrude into the living room, waving frantically. A pair of expennsive Italian loafers are kicked off the feet revealing a pair of expensive patterned socks.

By their feet shall ye know them.

DELIA
It's Otho.

CHARLES
Otho, why didn't you just come in the door?

OTHO's voice comes as if from a great distance.

OTHO (os)
It's bad luck.

CATHY
Hold your breath and we'll pull.

With much concerted effort, the entire DEETZ family at last manages to pull OTHO into the living room.

All this while the MOVING MEN are variousisly carting out the handsome old furniniture and bringing in the hideous new furniture.

OTHO is Robert Morley at his most obscenely fat and faggoty. But he's not all fat and fun -- this customer carries emotional weight as well.

As OTHO is s pulled through the window he is holding onto the curtains for support. And when he is at last all the way through, and upright on his feet, he suddenly gives a tremendous yank. The whole drapery apparatus, including valences, crashes to the floor.

OTHO
That was the single most unattractive window treatment I have ever seen in the entire of my existence.

DELIA
I'm so glad you could come, Otho.

OTHO is looking around the room with an eye of quiet horror.

OTHO
Well, when you told me about this place, I had an intuition. Call it a hunch -- that it was going to be a fabled monstrosity of a house. And it certainly is. Charles, you're going to have to write two romances, a western, and three of those wretched detective novels to afford

what I'm going to have to do to this place.

CHARLES
That's fine, Otho. I'm starting work as soon as the word processors get here. This country air. I'm going to be able to write twelve books a year instead of just eight. I can feel it already -- plots. Plots crowding in on every side of me. Plots mean books, and books mean money, and with money you buy the things you haven't got. Like fabulous houses, in fabulous, fabulous Connecticut.

During this speech OTHO has been sureptitiously posing for LYDIA's camera.

OTHO
Is the rest of the house as bad as this?

DELIA
The rest of the house is worse. When can you and I get started?

OTHO
No time like the present, as my wicked stepmother used to say.

With an unexpected and dramatic sweep of his hand, OTHO sweeps BARBARA's entire collection of ceramic and porcelain horses from the mantelpiece. They all crash to the hearth, except for one, which CATHY manages to cath.

CATHY
Otho, that's terrible.

OTHO
My sentiments exactly.

He takes the sole remaining porcelain horse out of CATHY's hand and flings it into the fireplace.

Then, out of the pockets of his size 56 Georgio Armani jacket, OTHO takes two cans of spray paint -- the kind the graffiti artists use -- and shakes them as if they were castanets. They certainly sound like it.

OTHO
Delia, let's get this show on the

road.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

At one end, near the stairs leading up to the attic, BARBARA and ADAM are slumped against opposite walls.

BARBARA
God I hate these people.

ADAM
They make the gypsies look good.

BARBARA
Is this a punishment for something we did in life? That woman wants to destroy my house.

ADAM
I don't know if there's anything we can do.

BARBARA
We're going to try.

OTHO and DELIA appear coming up the stairs at the opposite end of the hallway.

OTHO
We're dealing with negative entertainment potential here. I mean there's absolutely no flow-through.

They're rounded the bend, and OTHO looks down the hallway. It's empty. ADAM and BARBARA are no longer there.

DELIA
What's wrong?

OTHO
I thought I saw something.

DELIA turns and spray-paints on the wall -- probably in luminous orange -- the word ECRU.

DELIA
Okay?

OTHO
You read my mind. I love clients who can read my mind. I don't think

people realize how strong a connection there is between interior decoration and the supernatural. If we could all read each other's minds, this world would be an infinitely more beautiful place to live in.

DELIA and OTHO have reached the first door on the right. DELIA opens the door and they step inside.

DELIA
This will be Lydia's room.

INT: LYDIA'S ROOM - DAY

It's not LYDIA's room yet, of course, because it still has the MAITLANDs' furniture in it -- it's merely an old-fashioned and little-used guest bedroom.

DELIA
What do you think?

OTHO
Viridian?

DELIA
She'll love it.

OTHO spray-paints the word VIRIDIAN on the wall -- right over a wedding picture of ADAM and BARBARA.

Behind DELIA and OTHO, the room's closet door swings slowly open with an ominous CREAK.

DELIA and OTHO turn that way, with a suggestion of dread.

Inside the closet, BARBARA'S corpse is suspended from the ceiling by a belt. The corpse twists with a creak, and we see BARBARA's staring eyes, her blackened tongue, her broken neck.

DELIA and OTHO stare aghast.

DELIA
Well, we just have to hope that the other closets are bigger than this one.

She walks over and slams the door in BARBARA's contorted face.

INT: HALLWAY -- SAME TIME

DELIA and OTHO come out of LYDIA's bedroom.

OTHO
This whole house smells so dowdy.
Whole lifetimes of dowdiness.
Generations of dowdiness.

DELIA
The master bedroom suite.

DELIA opens a door on the opposite side of the hallway -- ADAM and BARBARA's old room.

The room looks as if BARRBARA and ADAM left it just a few hours ago. DELIA and OTHO poke around, the crassest of crass intruders.

OTHO goes over to the closet door, and opens it -- but before he actually looks inside, his attention is drawn back to DELIA.

DELIA
I was thinking of a pale ochre.

OTHO picks up a porcelain figurine he finds particularly offensive.

OTHO
I was thinking dynamite.

He turns and looks in the closet. Just ADAM's clothes. OTHO fingers the material with distaste.

OTHO (cont)
What happened to the people who lived here before?

DELIA
They died.

OTHO
Yes of course, but how did they die?

DELIA has gone over to the bathroom door, and pushed it wide open. But before she goes in, she stops a moment to think.

DELIA
I think they drowned.

Behind DELIA, in the bathroom, the old-fashioned bathtub

suddenly overflows with vile water. ADAM's face-down bloated corpse bobs to the surface, and then suddenly spills out onto the tiled floor, flipping over to land face up. His dead, drowned stare is ghastly.

DELIA stares downward directly at the corpse, then she points at it.

DELIA
Otho, I cannot live with these tiles.

The bathroom is now empty. No water, no drowned corpse.

INT: HALLWAY - SAME TIME

OTHO and DELIA come out of the Master Bedroom suite.

OTHO
Is there much more of this?

DELIA
There's Cathy's rooom. But we don't even have to look in there. She'll love whatever you do to it. She's such a little sheep.

OTHO
Oh, as long as we're here...

OTHO reaches out and turns the knob on the third bedroom door.

The door swings ominously open on CATHY's room. This had been BARBARA's sewing room, and is furnished accordingly -- straight out of Better Homes & Gardens 1963.

There is a difference however because on the rag rug in the middle of the floor lies the headless corpse of ADAM MAITLAND. Standing over him, holding in one hand a long knife and in the other ADAM's blood- and gore-dripping head, is BARBARA -- with a maniacal look on her face.

OTHO
I don't know if I really want to go in there.

DELIA
It's horrible. An honest-to-God sewing room.

Inside the room, the eyes of ADAM's severed head open and

look up at BARBARA.

ADAM'S HEAD
They don't see us. They can't hear us.

Outside, DELIA is shaking her head.

DELIA
The woman who lived here had the aesthetic instincts of Betty Crocker.

BARBARA
I'm going to get her.

DELIA
I cannot convey to you the extent to which this house bores me.

OTHO
I'm not so sure about that. I think this place probably has real atmosphere. Once you get out all this tacky furniture, strip off the wallpaper, take down a few walls, enlarge the first-floor windows, alter the traffic pattterns, re-do the exterior, call in the landscapers, and -- perhaps -- give some thought to an inground pool -- once you do all that, the place might just be livable. Isn't there a third floor?

DELIA
Attic space.

OTHO
Let's see. Maybe we could turn it into a media room.

They head up the stairs to the attic.

INT: CATHY'S ROOM - SAME TIME

ADAM'S HEAD has a look of terror on it.

ADAM'S HEAD
Oh God. I forgot to lock the attic door.

ADAM's headless body jumps up off the floor and rushes out of the room.

INT: STAIRCASE TO THE ATTIC -- SAME TIME

OTHO and DELIA climbing. The headleess corpse rushes past them, around the bend in the stairs and out of sight.

DELIA
Did you feel something?

OTHO
I felt something cold.

The expression on OTHO's face suggests he knows more than he's telling.

INT: LANDING OUTSIDE ATTTIC DOOR - SAME TIME

The headless corpse rushes through the open door into the attic.

INT: ATTIC -- SAME TIME

The headless corpse slams the door shut, turns the key in the lock. Then he slumps against the locked door in an exagggerated stance of relief.

INT: ATTIC LANDING -- SAME TIME

DELIA tries the knob. The door is locked.

OTHO
You don't have a key?

DELIA
Maybe Charles does.

OTHO
I have a feeling there's something interesting behind this door.

INT: CATHY'S BEDROOM -- SAME TIME

BARBARA still holding ADAM'S HEAD.

ADAM'S HEAD
Whew! That was close.

BARBARA
We're going to get your head screwed on straight. And then we're going to think this thing through.

EXT: HOUSE -- NIGHT

Dark, quiet, a light burning in the dining room window.

INT: DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

The DEETZs around the dining room table. There are candles, good china laid out -- but they're eating out of Chinese take-out boxes.

LYDIA
I can't believe that we're eating Cantonese.

CHARLES
There's only one Chinese restaurant in town, darling, and it happens to be Cantonese.

LYDIA
I could have a stroke from the amount of MSG that's in this food.

DELIA
This is our first meal in this house, Lydia. Why don't we all do our little parts to make it a pleasant one?

CHARLES
I'm building you a darkroom in the basement. Nobody's ever going to steal your chemicals again.

LYDIA
I should have stayed in New York with my mother, even if she does live in Queens. In New York -- even in Queens -- you get real stores, real people, and there are real things to do. Just driving through Winter River made me want to slit my throat.

CHARLES

We're the first trickle. In a couple of years this whole town will be filled with people like us. Zabar's will open a Winter River branch.

DELIA
And when Otho and I get through with this house, you people are not going to recognize it as the same place.

CATHY
(Meekly) I sort of like it the way it is.

The family stares at her, unbelieving.

CATHY (cont)
I mean, it's already sort of like somebody's home, isn't it?

There is a pause, as if the family were considering this whole business in a new light. Then the moment and the light fade.

DELIA
Charles, we need to call that realtor tomorrow and get the key to the attic door.

CHARLES
We're going to have a lot to do tomorrow...

DELIA
The Goodwill Truck is coming, and whatever is up there in that attic goes away with it.

INT: ATTIC -- DAY

ADAM and BARBARA are lying down on the floor, peering out of one of the small windows overlooking the front yard of the house.

EXT: FRONT YARD: ADAM AND BARBARA'S POV -- DAY

The entire front yard is filled with trucks and vans and automobiles. These include vehicles and representatives of the telephone company, the television cable company, plumbers, electricians, kitchen supply houses, computer

supply services, Goodwill and St Vincent DePaul, and whatever else there might be.

In the road in front of the house are several cars of rubbernecking locals, astonished by all the activity. The City has come to Town.

INT: ATTIC -- DAY

ADAM and BARBARA just look at one another. Then continue to watch.

EXT: FRONT AND SIDE YARDS -- DAY

We see these small vignettes, and perhaps others as well.

Moving men going in with very modern and expensive furniture, colliding with the charity men coming out with the MAITLAND furniture and personal belongings.

CHARLES in deep conversation with several men who stand with long lengths of cables draped over their shoulders. He is distracted by a large crane on the side of the house which is trying to get a 2500-pound Vulcan range through a window obviously not constructed with such an operation in mind.

DELIA is standing at the door of the barn/garage, directing half a dozen fine art movers in the placement of her gallery of sculptures. These are frightful monuments of welded steel.

LYDIA is under everybody's feet, relentlessly photographing the operation.

CATHY is simply standing out of the way, as if frightened of being trampled.

CATHY'S POV:

She looks at the whole house from the bottom to the top. And when she reaches the top, <u>she sees BARBARA and ADAM's faces in the window</u>.

BACK TO SCENE:

CATHY blinks hard. Her mouth drops open. She looks all around -- as if she'd just seen a ghost or two.

JANE BUTTERFIELD's car pulls up, and JANE gets out. The LITTLE XEROX GIRL sits in the front seat, burdened with an enormous stack of collated and stapled copies. JANE surveys

the whole business, and looks pleasantly impressed. She waves to CHARLES but he doesn't see her.

Then JANE catches sight of CATHY and comes over, squeezing between two vans.

JANE
Boy, when you city people do something, you do it right, don't you?

CATHY
Did you know the people who used to live here?

JANE
Yes, they were my best friends in all the world. But listen, when you have your taxes done this year, make sure you go to a major accounting firm. (Beat) Here, darling.

JANE hands a key to CATHY.

CATHY
Is this the key to the attic?

JANE
Of course not. Why would I have the key to Adam and Barbara's attic? But that's a skeleton key. It'll open any door in that house. Will you give it to your father? And tell him if I can do anything else, just call.

JANE goes away. After a few steps, she looks back.

JANE
You're going to be very happy here. I was going to buy it myself... until the audit.

CATHY smiles back, and then her face turns serious as she looks back up at the attic windows.

CATHY'S POV:

Nothing -- and no one -- there.

BACK TO SCENE:

CATHY is startled by a voice -- LYDIA's.

LYDIA
Hey!

LYDIA snaps a picture of CATHY.

LYDIA (cont)
You look dazed.

CATHY
The sun was in my eyes.

CATHY surreptitiously slips the skeleton key into her pocket.

LYDIA
Delia says Move Your Ass.
Everybody's got to help today.

CATHY looks up. DELIA is impatiently waving her over to the barn. More sculpture -- worse than before -- is being carted inside.

INT: ATTIC -- DAY

ADAM and BARBARA.

BARBARA
That little girl saw us.

ADAM
She couldn't have. We can't <u>make</u> them see us.

BARBARA
But she saw us. I could feel it.

INT: BARN/GARAGE -- DAY

The Fine Arts movers are going to it. DELIA in the midst of everything, berating CATHY.

DELIA
This is a family affair, darling. This is <u>life</u>. So buckle down and get your ass in gear. And be a perfect darling, and go get mommy some drugs.

CATHY
Any particular kind?

DELIA
It doesn't matter. Just remember though, too many is better than too few. And a glass of Perrier, one cube.

CATHY takes her marching orders and goes off towards the house.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- DAY

A BLAST OF STEAM --

fills the hallway, because workmen are already going at the wallpaper. CATHY emerges from it.

All the doors are open, with moving men and workmen in every room.

Down at the end of the hall stands CHALRES, directing men who are carrying compuuter components into the room that will be his study.

CATHY starts to go into the bathroom -- to get her mother's drugs -- but there are at least three plumbers in there, and the whole place is torn apart.

CATTHY continues down the hall.

CHARLES sees her.

CHARLES
Where is your sister? She could be a little help around here.

CATHY
In her room?

LYDIA's door is the only one closed. CHARLES goes over and without knocking, flings open the door.

INT: LYDIA'S ROOM -- DAY

On LYDIA's bed is a very MUSCULAR MOVING MAN, clad only in jockey shorts. LYDIA is moving quickly all around the bed, taking rapid-fire photographs of him.

CHARLES
Lydia, moving day is no time to make one more attempt at losing your

virginity.

LYDIA
I have a concept for a moving man calendar.

CHARLES
I want you and Cathy --

As the MUSCULAR MOVING MAN gets up from the bed, nonchalantly reaching for his trouserers, CHARLES looks around for CATHY. She's no longer there.

CHARLES
Now I've lost her.

INT: STAIRCASE TO ATTIC -- DAY

CATHY creeps upward, taking the skeleton key from her pocket. She stops momentarily when she hears her father's voice.

CHARLES (os)
Cathy! Cathy!

Then when that voice is covered by other sounds of the moving, she continues upward.

INT: ATTIC LANDING

CATHY quietly inserts the key in the lock of the attic door. She turns it. The key is stiff. She turns harder. It's stuck. CATHY tries the door -- it's no go. She turns the key again. This time it goes all the way around. CATHY grins. Then she puts her hand on the knob and tries to turn it. It's stuck.

Then the key pops out of the lock and falls to the floor.

CHARLES's head suddenly appears behind her.

CHARLES
What are you doing?

INT: ATTIC

ADAM is holding on tight to the knob of the door. With an awl (or some similar object) BARBARA has poked the key out. The two stand absolutely still, listening, terrified of the living intruders -- pretty unseemly behavior for a pair of honest-to-goodness ghosts.

INT: ATTIC LANDING

CATHY and CHARLES.

CATHY
I was just trying to open the door. Mrs. Butterfield brought over a skeleton key. But it doesn't woork.

She hands her father the key.

CHARLES
Skeleton keys never work. Anyway, this can wait.

They start down the stairs.

EXT: YARD AND BARN

DELIA comes out of the barn, tearing her hair. She screams up at the house.

DELIA
Where are my drugs?!

INT: ATTIC

BARBARA and ADAM have moved away from the door.

ADAM
There's nothing we can do. It's just a matter of time before they unlock this room. There goes the model. There goes our last refuge.

BARBARA
We're not going to wait here like cornered animals, I can tell you that.

ADAM is riffling through the Handbook.

BARBARA (cont)
What are you looking up?

ADAM
Here. Emergencies. (Reads) "In case of emergency, draw a door."

BARBARA
I don't know why you keep looking in that stupid book.

ADAM takes a piece of chalk and draws a large door on the exposed brick of the chimney.

BARBARA
You actually think this is going to work?

ADAM draws a doorknonob. Then he tries to turn it. The door, perhaps to his surprise, fails to open.

BARBARA (cont)
Yet another triumph for Adam and Barbara in the afterlife.

ADAM
Wait.

He writes on the door: KNOCK AND ENTER.

He exchanges a glance with BARBARA. She's even more skeptical than before.

ADAM knocks on the door, and turns the knob.

The chalked door swings magnicently open.

Behind is a Spielberg light source, soaring music, maybe even a heavenly choir singing syllables.

BARBARA and ADAM look at one another again. They take hands and step through.

Their figures are lost in the blinding light.

The door shuts softly after them.

The attic is left in deserted silence.

INT: EXPENSIVE AND TRENDY MANHATTAN RESTAURANT -- DAY

CHARLES is having lunch with EVELYN, his agent and ex-wife.

EVELYN
You never come into town anymore. I don't even get to see Lydia. I'm supposed to have visiting rights. Has that house bewitched you?

CHARLES
Evelyn, I talk to you three times a day on the telephone. I don't consider that neglect. Especially not where ex-wives are conceerned.

EVELYN
I know. You're taking up more of my life than you ever did when we were married. Your output has doubled since you moved to that god-forsaken place. I can hardly keep up with the contracts. I was sure you and Delia were going to spend ten days up there and then turn right back around.

CHARLES
No, we're all settled in. Delia is bringing a new awareness and appreciation of hyper-kinetic welded steel sculpture to rural Connecticut -- her words. And after you managed to sell Lydia's Moving Man Calendar concept, she's decided that Winter River is the <u>only</u> place to begin a major career in photography.

EVELYN
Cathy?

CHARLES
Oh Christ, that kid doesn't really fit in anywhere. Which means she's fine anywhere.

EVELYN
But don't you miss New York at all?

CHARLES
SoHo was filling uup with Wall Street lawyers. I'm now convinced that the only place to be truly artistic and productive is in that house at the top of the hill overlooking a sleepy little town called Winter River. Evelyn, the Deetzes have settled in for good.

EXT: HOUSE -- DAY

It actually looks good -- at least from the outside. Calm and sedate.

It even seems to turn Norman Rockwell-time when a big yellow schoolbus arrives and deposits CATHY on the front lawn.

She waves cheerily to all her little firneds inside the bus, and then goes towards the house -- perhaps not so cheerily. She's abandoned the SoHo look entirely, by the way.

She goes up to the house, up the steps, and in at the front door.

INT: FOYER AND LIVING ROOM -- DAY

OTHO's worked his magic, and the house is exactly as DELIA probably wanted it. Fashionable in the extremity of the term, angling for a spread in <u>Architectural Digest.</u> Garish, uncomfortable, expensive, not meant in any serious way for human habitation.

CATHY
Hi Mom.

DELIA
I'm four minutes off.

DELIA is in the corner of the living room, working on her

water clock. This is a tall, enormous, narrow sculpture -- reaching floor to ceiling, and then stretching up through a hole carved through to the next floor. It's a mass of small buckets, dishes, drains, pipes, levers, and counter-weights with running water keeping the whole thing in tremulous motion. It somehow also manages to keep the time on a little dial that's set on a kind of eye-stalk protruding into the room.

BACK TO SCENE:

DELIA is making fine-tuning adjustments.

CATHY
I'm going upstairs to do homework, Mom.

DELIA doesn't respond.

CATHY
I've got lots of homework so I'll probably be in my room for a while.

CATHY starts up the stairs.

DELIA doesn't even look after her. A plate of water somewhere high on the clock tilts forward and douses DELIA.

DELIA
Damn.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- DAY

CATHY walks quietly along the hallway. LYDIA'S room door is open, and CATHY looks in.

CATHY'S POV:

LYDIA is sitting on the edge of her bed, taking photographs of her feet.

BACK TO SCENE:

CATHY
Is Dad here?

INT: LYDIA'S BEDROOM -- DAY

LYDIA
He's in New York, having lunch with my mom. I bet they're having an

affair.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- DAY

That's evidently all CATHY wanted to know, because she's already started down the hallway. She goes into her bedroom for a moment, and when she comes out again, she's no longer carrying her school books annd jacket. But she is carrying a screwdriver, a nail file, an ice pick, and a credit card.

She looks cautiously down the hall, sees no one, hears nothing, and then starts up the stairs to the attic.

INT: ATTIC LANDING - DAY

CATHY kneels down with her implements, about to start an assault on the door. She chooses the nail file first, and inserts it into the keyhole. It should be obvious that CATHY is not an experienced housebreaker.

But as she grasps the door knob for support, it turns in her hand and the door swings open ominously.

INT: ATTIC -- DAY

CATHY comes inside. The room is dim, and filled with dust motes. There are shadows in all the corners.

The first thing she sees, of course, is the model town. She's entranced. She peers at it from different angles, and is dumbfounded with pleasure, her fear forgotten. She continues to walk around the model, oblivious to everything else.

She finds a button on the side of the table on which the model rests, and presses it. The artificial sun comes on, and bathes the model of Winter River in sunlight. Then...

A LOUD CRASH --

behind CATHY. She whirls around, barely stifling a scream, confronting only a push broom that she has brushed from its hook on the wall.

In recovering from this false scare, she kicks something. She ducks under the table and comes up with a small book. She holds the cover up to the light.

CATHY
"Handbook for the Recently Deceased"

She looks around the room as if suddenly someone were going to be there to answer all her questions.

No one's there, but then she notices the door, drawn in chalk on the exposed brick of the chimney.

CATHY
"Knock and Enter"

She wears an expression that says quite clearly, "Should I?" Obviously she shouldn't, but in fact, she does.

The door does not open.

A voice sounds from downstairs.

LYDIA (vo)
Cathy, Della needs your help!

CATHY gives one more look at the town, and then goes to the door quickly and silently.

LYDIA (vo)
Right now, Della says!

CATHY finds the key to the room in the door, on the inside. She takes it out of the lock.

INT: ATTIC LANDING -- DAY

CATHY locks the door quickly, tries the knob to make sure, gathers up her abandoned tools and hurries downstairs. We see that she also has the Handbook under her arm.

DISSOLVE TO:

BARBARA AND ADAM

Still, they look cautiously to the right and left -- just with their eyes. They're astounded by what they see, though we don't yet see it.

ADAM
Not what I expected when we walked through that door.

BARBARA
No.

The camera draws back and we find that ADAM and BARBARA are in:

INT: A WAITING ROOM - DAY

And it's just about the most unpleasant waiting room that you ever remember waiting in. Fifties furniture with broken legs of couches propped up on telephone books. Standing ashtrays with dirty sand. Linoleum floors patched a hundred times. National Geographics with the covers torn off.

As the camera completes a circle of the room, we find that a RECEPTIONIST is there. She's the quintessential 50s receptionist -- tight sweater, bullet tits, bleached hair, red lipstick. She's wearing a ribbon across her breast reading "MISS ARGENTINA" and there's a deep knife slash across her throat.

RECEPTIONIST
You don't have an appointment, do you?

ADAM
We didn't know how to make one.

BARBARA
An appointment for what?

RECEPTIONIST
You'll have to wait if you don't have an appointment.

BARBARA
How long do we have to wait?

ADAM
Wait for who?

RECEPTIONIST
There are all these people here ahead of you.

The waiting room is now filled with people. Dead people, some in fairly awful states.

BARBARA and ADAM look around for a moment, then very quietly, they reach out to grasp hands.

CAMERA pushes in close, and then when it pulls out again:

INT: OFFICE - DAY

BARBARA and ADAM are still holding hands, as if they hadn't

moved. But they obviously have, because they're now in an entirely different place. It looks like a state office in a run-down government building.

The feeling is that of being interviewed for unemployment benefits.

The interviewer is a typical civil service employee: gruff, uncaring, overweight, bureaucratic, unimaginative, unyielding. The man also has a small bullet hole in his temple.

BUREAUCRAT
I don't understand why you came to me.

ADAM
We didn't do it on purpose.

BARBARA
We need some help.

BUREAUCRAT
I don't help. Helping is not part of my job description.

ADAM
What is your job?

BUREAUCRAT
I evaluate individual cases and determine if help is needed, deserved, and available.

BARBARA
We need help. We deserve help.

BUREAUCRAT
But is it available?

The BUREAUCRAT opens his desk drawer to pull out a file. A snake slithers out of the drawer and across the desk. BARBARA and ADAM jump. The BUREAUCRAT looks at them as if they were crazy.

ADAM
(Getting hold of himself) You have a file on us?

BUREAUCRAT
Adam and Barbara Maitland?

They nod.

BUREAUCRAT (cont)
I have your file. Of course I have your file. Parts of the system work pretty good. You want something, it's there. Sometimes. You don't want something, it's there too, sometimes. That snake for instance. (Reading) Less than one terrestrial year.

ADAM
What?

BUREAUCRAT
You're asking for help after less than a year.

BARBARA
What difference does that make?

BUREAUCRAT
(Shrugging) Good luck. You've got a hundred and twenty-four years to go, and you're going to use up all your vouchers now?

ADAM
A hundred and twenty-four years?

BUREAUCRAT
That's your term. You spend a hundred and twenty-five years on earth, actually, in that house, which entitles you to only three class-one intercessions, and you're going to use the first one up in your first year? You probably haven't even read through the manual completely yet.

BARBARA
Somebody might have told us.

BUREAUCRAT
About what?

ADAM
The hundred and twenty-five years.

BUREAUCRAT
Come on. The notice is perfectly comprehensible.

ADAM
We didn't get any notice.

BUREAUCRAT
It was sent.

It's obvious from his tone that things have gone astray before.

BARBARA
Look, it doesn't matter. All we want is to find out how to haunt a house so that we can get those awful people out of there.

BUREAUCRAT
(Checking the file) The Deetzes. Have you worked with the manual?

ADAM
Handbook for the Recently Deceased?

BUREAUCRAT
No. The Intermedia Interface. (Beat) Haunting.

BARBARA
We never got that either.

BUREAUCRAT
Let me see if I have an extra copy. (On the intercom) Miss Argentina, do we have an extra copy of Booklet 47-YR?

RECEPTIONIST (v.o.)
No.

BARBARA and ADAM give him a look, as if to say, All Right, Do Something Right for a Change.

BUREAUCRAT
I'll assign you a case worker. Go on back, she'll visit you soon.

ADAM
We don't know how to go back.

BUREAUCRAT
Out that way, through the typing pool, down the corridor, sixth door on your left.

INT: TYPING POOL -- DAY

A vast room of desks arranged in a grid, straight out of HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS... Each desk is occupied, too, but most of the secretaries are merely skeletons, or mouldering corpses slumped over their typewriters.

Only one secretary, somewhere in the vast grid, is typing slowly, with long pauses between words.

As ADAM and BARBARA walk through, looking to the right and left, a vast stack of files slips off a desk and spills out onto the floor.

INT: CORRIDOR - DAY

Empty, like a hotel corridor, but all the doors are of different types -- a revolving door, a dutch door, church doors, what have you.

BARBARA
A hundred and twenty-five years. I can't believe it. I can't believe they didn't even tell us. You'd think --

One of the doors on the right opens a little way, and a man peers out. There's something very sinister about him, though he's trying to be polite and friendly.

SINISTER MAN
(To Adam) Were you ever President of the Philippines?

ADAM
Me?

BARBARA
Sorry. No.

The man shuts the door. ADAM and BARBARA walk on, till they come to a door that looks exactly like the swinging door between the kitchen and dining room of their house.

BARBARA
This is the sixth door.

BARBARA pushes it open.

INT: DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Everything is dark, quiet -- but the furniture is obviously not theirs, and neither is the decoration. ADAM and BARBARA exchange glances, and push on through into the living room.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Quiet, dark except for some tracked spots on the water clock which is quietly gurgling.

ADAM
How long do you suppose we were in that waiting room?

JUNO
Two months.

A spot comes on, revealing JUNO -- their case worker. She's an older woman, no nonsense about her. Overdressed, in an outfit that includes a blouse with ruffled cuffs. We will at some point catch a glimpse of slashed wrists -- maybe they're even still bleeding.

JUNO (cont)
I'd nearly given up on you. I was about to leave. I do have other clients.

BARBARA
Are you our case worker?

JUNO
Yes. My code name is Juno.

BARBARA
Why does a social worker need a code name?

ADAM
Can you help us?

JUNO
It depends on what's wrong.

BARBARA
We're very unhappy.

JUNO
What do you expect? You're dead.

ADAM

We'd like some help in getting rid of the people who moved in here. Barbara and I wouldn't mind sharing the house with people who were --

JUNO
-- like you used to be?

BARBARA
Yes.

ADAM
But these people --

He indicates the sculpture.

JUNO
Things seem pretty quiet now.

BARBARA
The man we talked to a few minutes ago --

JUNO
Actually, that was a few weeks ago.

BARBARA
-- said there was some kind of pamphlet --

JUNO
47-YR.

ADAM
Yes.

JUNO
Hopelessly out of date.

BARBARA
Do you have something else?

JUNO
They've just come out with this.

She takes a FLOPPY DISK out of her purse.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Empty, still, but down at the end of the hall there's a green glow around one of the doors.

INT: CHARLES'S STUDY - NIGHT

JUNO is sitting at the computer console, plugging in the floopy disc. Her fingers tremble over the keys.

JUNO
It obviously doesn't do any good to pull your heads off in front of people if they can't see you.

ADAM
We have to start simpler, is that it?

JUNO smiles at her able pupil. She points at the screen. The title of the program as come up:

A PRIMER
FOR
MATERIALIZATIONS
HAUNTINGS
AND
COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE LIVING

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JUNO
Easy to follow instructions, but just do a little at the time. That works best I'm told. And of course, practice, practice, practice. It's tricky but -- you weren't murderers by any chance, were you?

BARBARA
No.

JUNO
Pity. Murderers seem to have an easy time of it. Just look at Amityville. He was one of my cases. Didn't have to give that one any lessons. From Day One...

ADAM
And this tells us what we need to know?

JUNO
It should. Shall I leave you to it?

BARBARA has already taken JUNO's place at the console. She's

reading the first set of instructions, a long paragraph headed "ELEMENTARY MATERIALIZATIONS", sub-headed "HANDS AND FEET".

BARBARA
If this works, we'll be fine.

ADAM is looking over BARBARA's shoulder.

ADAM
But if we need you again, how do we --

He turns around to address JUNO directly, but she is no longer there.

INT: MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

DELIA reading in bed, and watching television, and eating. She hears a noise outside in the corridor, listens for a moment and then gets up to investigate.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Empty, but a closet door is open.

DELIA goes down to investigate. She finds in the open linen closet that one of the drawers is open, and a pile of her best designer sheets has been dropped on the floor.

DELIA
Damn those girls.

She picks the sheets back up, puts them in the drawer, and shuts the linen closet door.

She returns to her bedroom.

When she disappears, the linen closet door swings slowly open again. BARBARA and ADAM come out holding sheets.

BARBARA
I might have known a woman like that wouldn't have a single pair of plain white sheets. It's all designer stuff.

ADAM
I don't think this is going to work.

INT: CHARLES'S STUDY - NIGHT

CHARLES is working with two printers at once, and the pages are just spilling out. CHARLES is also working a xerox machine, and talking on the telephone -- all at the same time.

He hears something in the corridor outtside -- a kind of low moaning.

CHARLES
(into telephone) Just a minute, Evelyn. Somebody --

He goes to the door and flings it open.

Two figures are right there in the doorway -- ghosts under sheets. But they're designer sheets.

CHARLES
Oh Jesus, you two. Is Connecticut so boring that you have to think up shit like this? I've got a book due at Dell tomorrow morning, and I'll get a bonus if it there's on time -- and you want to make me miss that bonus?

He slams the door, turns around. Then turns around again, and jerks the door open. The ghosts are retreating, beaten.

CHARLES
And Delia is going to kill you when she sees that you cut holes in her Ralph Lauren sheets.

He slams the door again.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

ADAM and BARBARA as ghosts under sheets.

ADAM
God this is so corny. Don't they have anything better than that? Sheets?

BARBARA
(imitating Juno) Practice, practice, practice.

At this moment, they are startled when the door of LYDIA's

room flies open. LYDIA jumps out and takes a whole series of photographs of them, one after the other.

LYDIA
Sick! Sexual perversion! You guys never did this kind of thing in New York. Total gross-out. If you're going to do weird sexual stuff you ought to stay in your bedroom, okay? It's so embarrassing.

LYDIA flies back into her room.

ADAM
(Discouraged) Keep trying?

BARBARA
Might as well.

They open the door of the master bedroom, and glide inside.

INT: MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Television still going, DELIA asleep. ADAM and BARBARA go over and stand beside the bed.

ADAM
Moan, I guess.

Tentatively, they moan and groan. DELIA doesn't stir.

BARBARA
I feel really stupid.

ADAM
It's not stupid. We're ghosts. Ghosts are supposed to moan. Moan louder.

They moan louder, and more weirdly.

DELIA stirs, reaches over to the bedside table for the remote control device, and without opening her eyes, turns off the television set. Then she turns over, and is lost to the world totally.

BARBARA sighs. She and ADAM walk towards the door. When they open it however, CATHY is standing there -- and both ADAM and BARBARA jump backwards with yelps of fright.

CATHY
Are you the guys who're hiding out

In the attic?

ADAM
(fake terror voice) We're ghosts.

BARBARA
(Moans)

CATHY
What do you look like under there?

ADAM and BARBARA go out into the hall -- as if to keep from waking DELIA with their conversation.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

ADAM, BARBARA, and CATHY.

ADAM
Aren't you scared?

CATHY
Those are <u>sheets</u>. I'm not scared of sheets. Are you gross under there? Are you "Night of the Living Dead" under there?

ADAM
What?

CATHY
It's this gross movie.

BARBARA
(Pulling off the sheet) If I had seen a ghost at your age, I would have been frightened out of my wits.

CATHY
You're not gross. Why were you wearing the sheet?

BARBARA
That's what the program told us to do.

ADAM
You can actually see us? Even without the sheets?

CATHY
Is this like a trick question?

ADAM
No, it's not a trick question. Can you really see us?

BARBARA
Tell the truth.

CATHY
I always tell the truth, even when it hurts and gets me in trouble and people don't want to hear it. Of course I can see you.

BARBARA
Nobody else can.

CATHY
I'm wearing contacts. Also I read through "Handbook for the Recently Deceased". Were you trying to scare my mom or something?

BARBARA
Something like that.

CATHY
It won't work. She's sleeping with Prince Valium tonight. I stole the key to the attic, you know.

MODEL TOWN

Moonlit, serene.

INT: ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

ADAM's rigged up a moon, and stars too. ADAM, BARBARA, and CATHY stand just beyond the fringes of the town, dimly lighted giants.

CATHY
You did this? You carved all these little figures and houses and things?

ADAM
(Pleased) I certainly did.

CATHY
And this used to be your house, I

bet.

BARBARA
I don't think it would be a very good idea if you told your parents or your sister that we're up here.

ADAM
Unless you think we could scare them.

CATHY
Why do you want to scare everybody?

ADAM
We want to frighten you away. So that you'll move out.

CATHY
You don't know us very well, do you? (Beat) I like it up here. Can I visit you sometimes? I promise I won't --

BARBARA
Of course you can visit us. We don't have much company -- not since the funeral anyway.

CATHY
What was it like? The funeral.

ADAM
We weren't there. That we can remember.

CATHY
Those sheets are all wrong, you know.

EXT: HOUSE - DAY

Like all the other shots, but there's a quality of waiting about it. Full sun.

EXT: SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

Shaded by a tree.

EXT: BASEMENT WINDOW - DAY

Heavily in shadow.

INT: BASEMENT - DAY

Shadowed, potentially filled with terror as are all basements in horror movies. CAMERA moves over to a little shed-like room in the corner. Noise of a fast-ticking clock.

INT: DARKROOM - DAY

The fast-ticking clock is a timer. LYDIA is developing film, doing enlargements, and so forth. She's quick and expert at this. She's examining a contact sheet with a magnifying glass. Something's strange. She searches out the appropriate negatives and places a certain strip in the enlarger.

INT: UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

DELIA shrieks. Going through the dirty clothes, she's just come across the sheets with the eye-holes cut in them.

DELIA
Lydia! Cathy! Cathy!

INT: DARKROOM - DAY

A photograph coming up in the developing tank -- the ghosts in the hallway.

LYDIA
Oh my God... Oh shit... No feet...

INT: DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

LYDIA, pounding up from the basement with the wet print, collides with DELIA, rushing down from the second floor with the scissored sheets.

LYDIA
Oh God, Delia. They were ghosts! Ghosts! They didn't have any feet!

DELIA
Lydia, I'm going to kill you, honest to God I'm going to kill you. I'm going to lock you in that basement

like you were a goddamned hyacinth. I'm giving a dinner party for fourteen tonight. Do I need angst? No I definitely do not.

Open-mouthed, LYDIA is pointing at the photograph, which DELIA pointedly ignores.

INT: CHARLES'S OFFICE - DAY

Later in the day. LYDIA has calmed down, changed clothes. She now has a number of the prints. CATHY's there too, looking at the prints, saying nothing, and certainly not giving away the fact that she talked to the ghosts.

CHARLES is seated before the word processor, vainly trying to work.

LYDIA
Can you believe it? I mean, this is the weirdest --

CHARLES
Lydia, I don't know what it is with you and these practical jokes, but --

LYDIA
THIS IS NOT A JOKE!

CHARLES
This is air-brushing. This is a result of that class you took in air-brushing last fall. It's pretty good, but I've seen better. Now would you two young ladies please --

Absently, he's taken a floppy disc and plugged it into the computer. The machine whirs and the ghosts' program comes up.

LYDIA, who was about to say something, shuts up, and points. CHARLES looks at the screen, and then looks up at LYDIA, accusingly.

LYDIA
Don't look at me. I don't even know how to turn the damn thing on.

CHARLES begins to scroll through, until he comes to a section entitled "HISTORICAL OVERVIEW." Then he looks at the photographs again. He peers at the screen and reads aloud:

CHARLES
"...that demons loved the smoke of sacrifices, the melody, the blood of the victims, the intercourse with women; that they were attached to certain places for a time, and certain edifices that they infested. They preserved the inclination for things they had liked during their life, and often they appeared near their graves."

During this CATHY has slipped out of the room. CHARLES and LYDIA look at one another, both of them now sure that the house is haunted.

CHARLES
There's two of them?

LYDIA
I guess.

CHARLES
I wonder how they'd feel about a collaborator...

LYDIA points to the program on the machine.

LYDIA
Make a print-out. More hard evidence.

INT: KITCHEN - DAY

DELIA is frantically preparing for the evening's dinner party. LYDIA and CHARLES are very much in her way, trying to show DELIA the print-out and the photographs.

DELIA
I can't believe you two are doing this to me! Ghosts. <u>Ghosts</u>. I am giving a dinner party for fourteen people tonight, and that includes my agent, it includes my best buyer, it includes a woman who writes for <u>Art in America</u>. Charles, your ex-wife is coming and she's bringing the editor-in-chief of Ballantine Books. In fact everybody in the world who is important to our careers and our lives is driving out to Connecticut

tonight and you are coming to me with this business about ghosts! I can't believe that you two are trying to undermine my self-esteem in this way.

INT: ATTIC ROOM - DAY

ADAM, BARBARA, and CATHY. CATHY looks a little put-out. She has the floppy disc.

CATHY
Here it is. You left it downstairs.

ADAM
Oh no, I thought --

CATHY
My father's already printed it out. And Lydia has photographs of you.

BARBARA
But we don't show up in photographs. Or mirrors. Or --

CATHY
So there's fifteen pictures of those sheets floating down the hallway with no feet under them.

ADAM
Then your family knows we're here. Aren't they scared?

CATHY
(With impatience) The only thing that my family is afraid of is being embarrassed in front of their friends.

BARBARA
(Hesitantly) Do you have any ideas?

CATHY
Well, I've looked through this program and there are a few things I think might possibly work...

INT: DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner for fourteen, as promised. Everything looks very nice

and done up. For once the DEETZs seem to be in control and in their element.

The guests are strangers to us, with the exception of OTHO and EVELYN. Some of the guests are affecting distaste for having had to make the long drive to Connecticut. There's a bitchy fued going on between a couple of ARTISTS and REVIEWERS that threatens to become a full-scale war. And OTHO has slammed down his usual dozen drinks and is engaged in his third favorite occupation -- direct attacks on the personal weaknesses of his friends. He's singled out his victim, GUEST #7, a frail looking woman who is dressed "artistically."

OTHO
(To GUEST #7) Well, darling, you can only have a hysterectomy once, so why don't you tell us what you really went into the hospital for last week?

DELIA, to save the woman thus addressed from further embarrassment, deliberately knocks over a glass of water. The glass falls off the table onto the fine Oriental carpet beneath the table. There's a little distracting to-do about retrieving it.

DELIA
No, it's just water. The glass didn't even break. Won't hurt the carpet. Thank you.

OTHO
(Still on GUEST #7's CASE) I just hope it wasn't yet another of your dreary suicide attempts. You know what they say about people who commit suicide. In the afterlife, they become civil servants.

DELIA
(Interrupting) Charles and Lydia tried to play the most amusing joke on me this afternoon.

LYDIA
It wasn't a joke.

DELIA
They tried to convince me that this house was haunted.

OTHO's glance is sharp at this.

GUEST #1
By ghosts?

CHARLES
By what else?

DELIA
In sheets yet. Designer sheets. They --

The woman sitting nearest DELIA screams bloody murder. DELIA stares at her for a moment, then an expression of shock crosses DELIA's face and she shrieks as well.

The two women try to push back their chairs from the table, but can't.

The patterned flowers and vines in the carpet have begun to grow, twisting around the chair- and table-legs.

New shoots and vines appear, unfold, and twist even as we watch. The flowers bud and bloom, as in a Disney nature film.

The other guests look on with astonishment as more of the carpet sprouts.

There is a general retreat from the table. Women (and OTHO) scream, chairs are knocked over, and all are astonished.

LYDIA fetches one of her cameras -- never very far away.

LYDIA
It's the ghosts. I told you. I told you they were real.

CHARLES
We tried to tell you, Delia. (To EVELYN) We tried to tell her.

OTHO
(To GUEST #8) It's woooon-der-fuiii. Incontrovertible proof of the presence of the supernatural element in this house. Of course you remember I was one of New York City's leading paranormal researchers until the bottom dropped out of the business is '72.

GUEST #8
(Sick to death of this blowhard)

Paranormal... Is that what they're calling your kind now?

INT: ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

ADAM and BARBARA lying on the floor with their heads near the window, looking out over the front yard.

YARD OF HOUSE: THEIR POV - NIGHT

Filled with the cars of the guests, as well as DELIA and CHARLES' vehicles.

ADAM
Any minute now. They'll all run screaming --

BACK TO SCENE:

Timid knock at the door of the room.

BARBARA glances at ADAM and then goes to the door and opens it. CATHY is standing there, sheepish.

CATHY
They'd like for you to come downstairs. Mom says you can use any sheets you want.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The guests are sitting expectantly. The photographs are being passed around. DELIA, who obviously thinks that this is the choicest thing that ever happened to a family anywhere on the face of the earth, is holding forth.

DELIA
I mean, doesn't it indicate a marvellous sense of humor of the part of the ghosts that they actually do appear in sheets? Who would expect <u>that</u>?

OTHO
We are obviously dealing with a very sophisticated pair.

EVELYN
Charles, I want to know why you didn't tell me about this --

DELIA
We were waiting for proof. Lydia's photographs. The print-out. And --

She waves a hand toward the dining room. It's a total jungle there now.

CHARLES
We're swearing everybody to secrecy. Absolute secrecy.

EVELYN
At least until we make a few deals. Lydia darling, these photographs alone --

LYDIA
The Enquirer offered fifty thousand dollars for absolute proof of life after death.

EVELYN
Darling, don't waste your time with <u>them</u>. These pictures are going straight to Bob Guccione.

CHARLES
I was thinking of those photographs as illustrations for the text of the book I'm planning.

OTHO
With my experience in the field, I should obviously act as your consultant on this book.

EVELYN
<u>Series</u> of books. On the paranormal intrusion into everyday life. Right now I can think of at least five publishers -- (To GUEST #3) Bob, that includes you, doesn't it?

CHARLES
Right now I don't have more than a chapter breakdown.

EVELYN
That's enough for Bob. He trusts us. We won't talk about money tonight, I guess, but on Monday --

CATHY appears at the base of the stairs. Everyone looks to her expectantly.

CATHY
They don't want to come down.

OTHO
Why not?

The guests look at one another as if all this were an elaborate hoax.

CATHY
They just won't. They wouldn't say why.

DELIA
Well they have to. That's all there is to it.

OTHO
They must have a reason.

CATHY
I think the reason is they were trying to scare you, and you didn't get scared --

DELIA
Of course we weren't scared. Just a little startled. One of those vines went right up -- well, never mind.

CHARLES
I don't see --

He breaks off when he looks back at the dining room. It's completely clear again. The ultra-sophisticated guests are now convinced this whole business was a put-on.

GUEST #4
Total collective hallucination.

GUEST #3
Let's hold off, Evelyn, before we sign any contracts.

DELIA
This was <u>not</u> a hallucination, people. This was real, totally real.

GUEST #5

Of course they were rather spectacular effects -- for Connecticut I mean.

OTHO
(To CATHY) You can see them, can't you?

CATHY doesn't answer.

CHARLES
Where do they live? Hide out?

OTHO
All presences have a home space. A place where they work out of, so to speak.

DELIA is pleased, because OTHO is getting the conversation back on track -- that is to say, back towards how wonderful a family the DEETZs must be to have real ghosts in their house.

CATHY
The attic.

CHARLES
They can't be up there. That attic room is locked, and we've never found the key. We --

LYDIA
They're ghosts, Daddy. They do what they want.

EVELYN
Fabulous. The "Locked Door" Ghosts. "The Locked Attic Door Ghosts of Winter River". They probably committed suicide up there. Hanging. In attics, you hang yourself from the rafters. I'm totally enchanted.

INT: LANDING OUTSIDE OF ATTIC

CATHY and DELIA

DELIA
They're in there? This is where they've been hiding out?

CATHY nods. DELIA pounds on the door.

DELIA
All right, you dead people, come on out, or we're going to break down this goddamn door and drag you downstairs on the goddamn ropes you hanged yourself with.

CATHY
They didn't commit suicide.

DELIA
Evelyn said they did. Anyway, it doesn't matter. What matters is I've got a roomful of guests from New York down there, and they are expecting to see ghosts. (LOUD) Come on out, or I will make death so miserable for you that you will wish you had never been buried. (To CATHY) You've got to take the right tone in things like this, Cathy, or people -- whether they're dead or alive -- people will walk all over you. These are lessons that it's important for you to learn.

The door cracks open with an eerie whine.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The party waiting, expectant. DELIA comes down the stairs with a smug smile. CATHY follows, looking worried.

CHARLES
Are they coming?

OTHO
They're already here. I can feel it.

GUEST #3
How do we know?

The guests all look at one another, as if to say, They're Trying to Pull a Fast One.

Then, quite suddenly, these things happen:
An ugly modern lamp is knocked over and smashed.
An enormous rip appears in a dreadful canvas on the wall.
The ugly rug in the center of the room has a pentagle charred into it.

Two chairs with guests are knocked over backwards, with the guests spilling out.

There's a moment of stunned silence, and then the assembled guests -- without saying a word -- begin politely to applaud.

EXT: HOUSE - NIGHT

Black, deep night. No lights.

EXT: FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

The wind blows the swing so that the chains creak slightly. A rocking chair moves back and forth in the wind.

A cat climbs up the front stairs ominously, turns its head, snarls, arches its back, hisses, then runs off.

ADAM and BARBARA are now sitting in the swing, and JUNO is ensconsed in the rocker.

JUNO
How's it going?

ADAM
It's going great. We're going to spend the next century and a quarter doing parlor tricks.

BARBARA
Charles Deetz is writing a book. Lydia Deetz is auctioning off the photographs. Delia Deetz is preparing a series of dinner parties that would have given Pearl Mesta a stroke.

JUNO
(Checking her records by flashlight)
Isn't that --

ADAM
Cathy Deetz. She's okay.

BARBARA
She can see us.

JUNO
Publicity is discouraged you know. This is a routine haunting. Or was supposed to be. We don't want a

routine haunting to provide incontroverible proof of existence beyond death. It's --

ADAM
It's what?

JUNO
It's not allowed. That's why I came. To let you know that we're going to intervene.

BARBARA
Who's we?

JUNO
Oh you know. Us.

BARBARA
The dead?

Not the real answer, but JUNO replies:

JUNO
Oh yes. Of course. We the Dead.

ADAM
I don't like the sound of "intervene".

JUNO
Call it a little help then. To get rid of the Deetzes.

BARBARA
More manuals?

JUNO
No, it's simple. We call in an exorcist.

INT: AUTO PARTS STORE - DAY

Not really, but that's what it looks like. Wide window with counter, and behind that long rows of shelves. Several workers going back and forth to pick things up for the customers - JUNO among them -- who are waiting in line.

The WOMAN in front of JUNO has three milk-carton containers set in front of her. The labels read ECTOPLASM -- GRADE AAA. EXP 2/28/2155.

WOMAN
This isn't going to be enough. This is no cubbyhole seance with the curtains drawn in somebody's back parlor.

WORKER
It's all the requisition entitles you to. Have the prescription doubled if you want to, and then come back.

The WOMAN angrily takes the cartons, and slams away. JUNO steps up to the counter and slaps down a requisition slip. The WORKER looks at it.

WORKER
This is way in the back.

JUNO
I don't care if it's in the next dimension.

WORKER
It's probably on the top shelf, too.

JUNO doesn't answer. The WORKER goes sullenly away, walking down the aisle away from the window.

INT: AUTO PARTS AISLE - DAY

It suddenly begins to look very long. In fact, it is infinite. The WORKER himself begins to go faster and faster along the aisle, till the shelves and whatever is on them are merely blurs.

On and on and on.

Suddenly he stops. He looks around, and finds that he's in a particularly disused section of the shop. In fact it's sort of creepy back here.

He looks back up the aisle the way he came. It stretches on forever. There are big jars around him, and each one contains a dim swirling mist. The WORKER begins to check the requisition for the particular number.

The jars begin to rattle slightly, and to knock against one another -- almost as if in an effort to attract his attention. Choose me! Choose me! The WORKER grows nervous about this.

WORKER
I knew it. Top shelf.

He levitates upward. Very very high. At last he stops. He checks the number.

WORKER
4-2-4-7-0-4-6-0-3-Class B-A-R.
Right.

He takes the bottle off the shelf. It slips through his fingers, drops with a long whistle, and smashes on the floor far below.

WORKER
Oh shit.

He looks at the next bottle on the shelf. It is one number off.

WORKER
How much difference can it make, really?

As he takes this second bottle off the shelf, the white mist inside suddenly turns a glowing yellow. We get a ghostly image of a face inside the bottle: bearded, Middle-Eastern looking, mischievous, and malevolent.

INT: AUTO PARTS STORE - DAY

The WORKER hands over the bottle.

JUNO
You took your time.

WORKER
If you had any idea --

JUNO wipes away the dust from the label. The label reads BETELGEUSE.

JUNO
Betelgeuse.

WORKER
Beetle Juice to you too.

INT: ATTIC -- DAY

ADAM and BARBARA -- and CATHY studying the model intently.

CATHY
All right, I rode my bike all over Winter River today. And then I talked to Mrs. Butterfield.

BARBARA
You didn't --

CATHY
Of course I didn't tell her about you. I just asked her what changes there had been in town lately.

CATHY refers to notes as she enumerates these changes and points at the appropriate place in the model. ADAM may lift the buildings up, or scribble his own notations on the model itself.

CATHY (cont)
The Old Baptist Church is now the Kwan Do School of Karate. All right, and this used to be an appliance store, didn't it?

BARBARA
I bought my first washer-dryer there.

CATHY
Now it sells used paperbacks and wigs. Pearl Street is getting a new sidewalk.

ADAM
Which side?

CATHY
East. The nursing home burned down.

BARBARA
Oh no!

CATHY
Nobody got hurt. Mrs. Butterfield said it was for the insurance. She said she'd burn down her own shop except that she knew the IRS had a tail on her. And I took this Polaroid of the new house that was built right over here. Is that enough for you to go on?

ADAM
(Nods) Thanks a lot. (Wry smile) Barbara and I don't get out of the house much any more.

CATHY
It was fun.

EXT: HOUSE - DAY

A UPS van pulls up. The driver gets out, goes around to the back, opens the doors and takes out a round package with a domed top -- exactly the shape of the bottle in the auto parts store.

The driver walks up to the house, mounts the steps, and rings the doorbell.

EXT: FRONT PORCH - DAY

LYDIA cautiously opens the front door. We see now that the driver of the UPS van is JUNO.

JUNO
UPS. For the Deetz family. Are you a Deetz?

LYDIA
Maybe.

JUNO
Sign please.

LYDIA opens the door cautiously, signs, and takes the package. She closes the door and disappears into the house. JUNO goes back out into the yard.

EXT: YARD - DAY

JUNO turns back toward the house. ADAM and BARBARA are sitting on the roof. JUNO gives them the high sign. ADAM and BARBARA barely nod in return. JUNO's going to have to prove herself on this one.

INT: DINING ROOM - DAY

LYDIA is upwrapping the package. She stops a moment when she detects a fluttering movement inside. After that she's very cautious.

She tears the paper down, and is startled by what she sees. (We don't see it.)

CUT TO:

INT: GARAGE WORKSHOP - DAY

DELIA is working on one of her sculptures with an acetylene torch. She's wearing goggles, hat, gloves, asbestos apron -- the whole schmear. LYDIA appears in the open doorway, holding something out of sight.

LYDIA
(Screaming, to be heard) Delia!

DELIA at last turns around, pulls up her goggles.

DELIA
What is it?

LYDIA
Did somebody order a canary?

She shows the canary in its cage.

CU: THE CANARY

Sweetly singing.

INT: DINING ROOM - DAY

The canary and cage has been placed on the sideboard. ADAM and BARBARA are looking at it in perplexity.

BARBARA
She said exorcist the other day, didn't she? Exorcist, not canary. They're not the same thing. Why on earth did she send a canary?

They shrug helplessly, and turn away. Suddenly, behind them, a shrill attention-getting whistle. They turn, and look at the cage. Something's wrong. The lean closer.

CU: CANARY

It has the body of a songbird, but the head of the malevolent Middle-Eastern spirit.

BETELGEUSE
I'm your guy. Just wait. We'll get rid of those fuckers.

INT: DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The DEETZs at dinner. The CANARY on the sideboard.

DELIA

I hate birds. I've always hated birds. Who's going to take care of that bird? Not me.

LYDIA
I didn't order it.

DELIA
Looks Bloomingdale's to me. Or Nieman-Marcus. Nieman-Marcus is always selling things people don't really want.

CATHY
I'll take care of it.

CHARLES
Be sure you don't let him out. My mother used to say it was bad luck to have birds loose in the house.

DELIA
Your mother was a fount of wisdom. Your mother --

LYDIA gasps, and is staring at the cage. The others turn and look.

The CANARY has grown ten times its former size. It fills the cage and the bars are bulging.

LYDIA
Oh shit --

They start to get up from the table.

CHARLES
Every time we sit down to a meal --

DELIA
(To CATHY) Your goddamn people in the attic did this! (Yelling at the ceiling) All right! Get down here! This minute!

INT: ATTIC - NIGHT

BARBARA and ADAM hear DELIA's distant voice.

ADAM
Maybe we'd better check --

BARBARA
Maybe we'd better stay out of it.

INT: DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The CANARY bursts out of its cage. It's now the size of an eagle. It swoops down over the table and snatches up a cooked chicken and wolfs it down. Then as the DEETZs scatter, it flies after them, screeching and pecking at them. The DEETZES all duck for cover under anything available, and the CANARY flies around the room, smashing everything it can.

The CANARY suddenly lurches to a halt in the middle of the room, and though canaries in general can't hover, this one does.

CHARLES is hiding behind the couch; he peers up over it. LYDIA peeks out from behind the curtain and takes pictures very quickly. DELIA cracks the kitchen door and looks out at the quietness. CATHY -- the most exposed of them -- cowers in the corner.

The CANARY looks around. Then, taking deep breaths and burping, it suddenly lurches to twice its former size. Now it is perfectly enormous.

The CANARY screams. Fire streams out of its beak, igniting the dining room curtains. The enormous bird whirls once around the room, flies into the dining room, upsets the entire table, and smashes through the swinging door into the kitchen.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

This is where DELIA has taken refuge. DELIA screams as the CANARY flies in. The CANARY does a very quick and very dangerous destructive tour of the kitchen, while DELIA screams without letting up.

The CANARY heads right for DELIA -- as if to kill her -- then suddenly veers and bursts out through the back door -- taking the door and a generous portion of the adjoining wall with him.

EXT: NIGHTTIME SKY - NIGHT

The CANARY flies away, outlined against the full moon. We hear its raucous malevolent CHIRPING.

EXT: BACK OF HOUSE - NIGHT

DELIA, back-lighted, in the torn-out back doorway, sobbing. The other members of the family join her. Against all expectation, LYDIA bursts into tears.

CHARLES
(To CATHY) Is it coming back?

DELIA
Ask your friends. They did this.

CATHY
They're not my friends!

CATHY, in tears, turns around and runs.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

Laid waste to. CATHY runs through.

INT: DINING ROOM AND LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Laid waste to. CATHY runs through, shouting.

CATHY
They're not my friends! They're not my friends!

She pounds up the stairs.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

ADAM and BARBARA standing at the end, distraught and looking very much like ghosts.

CATHY runs up the stairs, and is startled to see them.

CATHY
I hate you!

She runs into her room. ADAM and BARBARA slowly fade.

INT: ATTIC -- NIGHT

ADAM is playing with the town, desultorily. BARBARA is nervously pacing.

BARBARA

Do you think they'll leave now?

ADAM
That canary was a pretty nasty customer, as songbirds go.

BARBARA
But what happens now?

ADAM
We wait and see. They're scared. Which is what we wanted. (Beat) Wasn't it?

BARBARA
He might have hurt somebody.

INT: CATHY'S BEDROOM - DAY

It's day but it's dark. The bedroom curtains have been closed. KATHY's lying in bed, reading. She's also been crying, it's evident. From another part of the house, the sound of HAMMERING.

INT: MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

DELIA stands at the window, peering out into the sky with a pair of binoculars. She's wearing her protective outfit, as if fearing another CANARY attack. The sound of HAMMERING.

INT: KITCHEN - DAY

CHARLES is hammering plastic over the hole in the back of the house. He finishes, stands back and admires his work. He goes out of the kitchen into the dining room.

INT: DINING ROOM - DAY

It's been cleaned up as well as can be expected. There are deep claw marks in the surface of the table. CHARLES passes through.

INT: LIVING ROOM - DAY

Same here. Furniture righted, things put back as much as possible. CHARLES turns to go upstairs. As he passes the front door, there's a loud THUMP against the door.

CHARLES yelps. He stares at the door. Nothing happens. He goes cautiously to a window and peers out. Evidently he sees nothing. He goes to the front door, which already has the chain on, and opens the door cautiously.

Nothing happens.

He takes off the chain, and opens the door a little wider. Nothing happens. He looks down at his feet.

There's the afternoon paper.

He grins at his own foolishness and picks it up, swaggering with his bravery.

INT: BASEMENT DARKROOM - DAY

LYDIA is examining prints of the CANARY. In the last she actually has a photograph's of BETELGEUSE's nasty head. She hangs the picture up to dry.

INT: UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

DELIA is reaching into the medicine cabinet, taking out a bottle of valium. She unscrews the top, and starts to shake out a couple of capsules. One comes out and she swallows it immediately. She tries for a second but nothing comes out. She shakes harder. She peers into the top of the bottle.

INT: CATHY'S BEDROOM - DAY

CATHY in bed as before, but her book is laid aside. She's asleep.

The bed rattles, and shakes -- very slightly.

CATHY turns in her sleep but doesn't wake up.

The bed starts to rise off the floor. Slowly but steadily it goes up to the ceiling.

The four spindles of the four-poster bed pierce the plaster. The bed continues to rise, the spindles burrowing deeper into the second story ceiling. CATHY is wedged between the ceiling and her bed, soon to be crushed, as if in a vise.

INT: ATTIC -- DAY

BARBARA and ADAM are sitting on chairs opposite each other, a board between them. They're playing cards.

ADAM lays out his cards.

ADAM
Gin.

BARBARA
That's not gin. Do you think that sometime in the next century or so you could learn the rules of this very simple --

Suddenly, on all four sides of them, the foreposter spindles from CATHY's bed break through the floor, spilling board and cards. ADAM and BARBARA leap up.

ADAM
That's Cathy's room just below here.

They rush for the door.

The door is locked -- supernaturally -- so even the ghosts can't open it. ADAM struggles with the lock.

BARBARA
Go through it!

ADAM
How?!

BARBARA
De-materialize.

ADAM stands very still, concentrates, and strains. Nothing.

ADAM
It doesn't work.

BARBARA
Someone's keeping us up here!

INT: LIVING ROOM - DAY

CHARLES is sitting down, reading the paper. He hears the noise of LYDIA, pounding up the basement stairs.

LYDIA (v.o.)
Daddy! Daddy!

CHARLES
I'm in here.

He looks up to see LYDIA, and automatically continues to turn the page of the paper. When he looks down at the page again, he yelps and drops the paper on the floor.

The paper that CHARLES tossed aside has fallen open to a double-page spread. In a parody of the Looney Tunes closing, we see BETELGEUSE's animated face, stuttererlng the legend beneath:

BETELGEUSE
That ain't all, Folks!

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

DELIA crosses the hallway, the empty bottle of Valium in her hand. She opens the door of CATHY's room.

DELIA
Cathy, your ghosts haven't been sneaking in my medicine cabinet, have --

DELIA'S POV:

CATHY's room looks curiously empty -- because the bed is up against the ceiling.

The fourposter is burrowing through the plasteer. If it goes much further, much higher, then sleeping CATHY is going to be smushed.

BACK TO SCENE:

DELIA
Cathy!

DELIA rushes into the room.

INT: CATHY'S BEDROOM - DAY

CATHY --

wakes up on the bed, staring at the ceiling, which is coming very muuch closer. The four posts grind and tear and splinter deeper into the ceiling.

DELIA --

with much more presence of mind than we've been giving her credit for, reaches up and grabs hold of the edge of the bedcovers.

With a mighty heave she drags them down, and CATHY comes with them.

CATHY spills into DELIA's arms, just as the bed smashes against the ceiling.

DELIA
What the hell have you been doing in here, Cathy?

CATHY awakens from a seeming trance. She looks up at the bed, sees how close the call was, and buries herself in DELIA's arms.

DELIA relents.

DELIA
Are you all right?

CATHY nods slowly.

CATHY
I think we'd better get out of here.

DELIA's already backing for the door.

As soon as CATHY starts out, however, she is lifted up off the floor and propelled backwards, straight through the window, smashing through the glass. She disappears totally from our view.

DELIA screams.

INT: LIVING ROOM - DAY

THE DOUBLE-PAGE NEWSPAPER SPREAD --

of BETELGEUSE's head suddenly becomes three-dimensional, like a severed head resting on the newspaper. But then BETELGEUSE rises straight up from the floor to become a scarecrow-like figure made entirely of newspaper. A newsprint suit, a colorful tie made of Sunday comics, papier-mache body.

He lunges for CHARLES's throat. CHARLES is caught off-balance and knocked to the floor. Follows a vicious fight between man and a superhumanly strong paper doll.

CHARLES
Lydia! Help me!

LYDIA takes a box of matches off the mantel, strikes one and

lights the paper man, who whooshes up in flame.

The fire seems to have little or no effect on the strength of the paper man, and he holds his grip on CHARLES, so that CHARLES is not only being strangled, he is being burned. He screams for more help. LYDIA begins beating both with a hearth rug to put out the flames.

The paper man begins to disintegrate into ash. His grip loosens as his arms are seered away. CHARLES's own clothes remain on fire, and LYDIA industriously beats them out.

EXT: HOUSE - DAY

An ambulance parked out front. Two ambulance attendants are bringing CHARLES out on a stretcher. He's conscious but dazed; he has fairly severe burns on his arms and neck. Much of his clothing is in charred tatters. DELIA walks along beside him, holding his hand and comforting him. She climbs into the back of the ambulance. LYDIA watches stricken from the porch, and when she takes pictures it's with tears in her eyes.

DELIA
Lydia, put down the damn camera and rescue your sister. Then I want both of you at the hospital!

The ambulance doors are slammed shut, and the ambulance takes off with a burst of siren.

LYDIA steps down from the front porch, and goes around the side of the house. There, perched among the branches of the tree, is CATHY. She's bruised and sore after having been hurled out of the window, but otherwise she's all right.

LYDIA
I'll try to find a ladder.

LYDIA's so distraught that she forgets to take a picture. She disappears.

The attic window of the house opens, and BARBARA and ADAM'S faces appear there, shadowed and slightly ominous.

ADAM
Are you all right?

CATHY
I am not all right. I just got thrown out the window, and the window was closed and if this tree

hadn't been here, I'd probably be dead. That siren you just heard was the ambulance coming to take my father away. My father has second- and third-degree burns. And there is not enough Valium in the world to calm down my mother. Even Lydia is upset, and nothing upsets Lydia. So basically nobody's all right. You're ghosts, fine, scare people, that's what you're there for. But don't kill us.

BARBARA
It wasn't our fault. We didn't want --

CATHY
You don't have to explain anything to me. I'm just a lowly human being. I'm just a little girl that I thought was your friend.

LYDIA appears around the corner of the house with a ladder.

LYDIA
Who are you talking to? Are you talking to those goddamn ghosts? After what they did to us? Well you just tell them that when she gets back from the hospital, Delia is going to be on the warpath.

The ladder is put against the tree, and CATHY begins to climb down, pointedly ignoring BARBARA and ADAM still in the window.

INT: ATTIC ROOM - DAY

ADAM and BARBARA, obviously disturbed, look at one another with concern.

BETELGEUSE (v.o.)
(Thin and piping voice) Hey, how'm I doing? Vrrooom! Vrroooom!

BARBARA and ADAM look around, but don't see anybody. Then they look down at the model town.

MODEL TOWN:

BETELGEUSE is riding down the street on a moped. He is of a

size to make MAIN STREET of the model look normal-sized. ADAM and BARBARA are titans in the sky. They peer down at him. He does wheelies.

BACK TO SCENE:

BARBARA and ADAM peer down at BETELGEUSE on his moped.

BARBARA
You're doing terrible. We want you out of here.

ADAM
I didn't like that man particularly, but you nearly killed him.

BARBARA
What did you think you were doing?

BETELGEUSE
Hey I've been in a fucking bottle for six hundred years. This is my night on the town.

ADAM
Have your night in sombody else's town.

BETELGEUSE
I don't get paid unless I do my job.

BARBARA reaches down into the model and plucks BETELGEUSE off the moped. The moped spins forward and through a window in one of the model buildings.

BARBARA lifts him up towards her, squeezing him slightly.

CU: BETELGEUSE IN BARBARA'S HAND

BETELGEUSE grins. Suddenly large spike shoot out all over his body, piercing the skin of BARBARA's palm and fingers. BARBARA's blood is a rich pink.

She releases the evil spirit and he plummets.

EXT: WINTER RIVER CONNECTICUT - DAY

BETELGEUSE parachutes to a soft landing on the town common.

BETELGEUSE
Watch it. I can work against you too.

On the ground he looks around for a moment. Then he peers up into the sky at ADAM's enormous face, looking down in anger.

BETELGEUSE
This burg got a cat house? I'm getting anxious, if you know what I mean. Six hundred years and all.

We hear the tinny strains of "Honky Tonk Angel", as if from down the street. BETELGEUSE takes off in that direction.

Right around the corner he comes across the whorehouse, with women -- women with demon horns -- hanging out of the windows beckoning him inside. BETELGEUSE rubs his hands together and hurries inside.

INT: ATTIC -- DAY

ADAM and BARBARA watching this from above.

BARBARA
There's no whorehouse in Winter River. Why did you build a whorehouse?

ADAM
I didn't --

But he doesn't even finish his sentence before an enormously strong wind blows through the attic, nearly knocking ADAM and BARBARA over. They close their eyes against the gale.

When they open their eyes again, they're no longer in the attic. They're in --

INT: JUNO'S OFFICE - DAY

A cubicle in a much larger office. There are other social workers, and other ghosts in distress, but we only catch glimpses of them.

JUNO
The whorehouse was my idea. I just wanted Betelgeuse out of the picture for a while. Until the three of us got things straight.

BARBARA
What things?

JUNO
Like what you people want. Do you want to get rid of the Deetzes or not?

ADAM
We do, but --

JUNO
I can't handle buts. Yes or no.

BARBARA
We didn't want anybody to get hurt.

JUNO
Mr. Deetz will recover. And the only bad scar will be on his neck. He can wear a high shirt collar. I'd also like to point out that you have the house to yourselves now.

ADAM
They're not coming back?

JUNO
I don't tell the future. At least not all the future.

BARBARA
What about Beetle Juice?

JUNO
That one? He'll remain with his whores until someone calls his name three times.

INT: MODEL WHOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Old-fashioned, turn-of-the-century, parody of Storyville. BETELGEUSE surrounded with horned lovelies, drinking champagne, carousing. But in the midst of it all, there's a very sly smile on his face.

INT: HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

CHARLES bandaged in bed. DELIA is plucking the petals from the flowers, and it looks like she's already made it through a couple of arrangements.

DELIA
It's war, right.

CHARLES
At least insofar as we have our first casualty. Me.

DELIA
I'm going to call Otho.

CHARLES
What's he going to do? Viciously rearrange their environment?

DELIA
Otho knows as much about the supernatural as he knows about interior decoration.

CHARLES
Let's hope he knows more... Okay, call him but don't tell Cathy.

DELIA
Why not?

CHARLES
I think she's in with them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT: HOUSE - DAY

The DEETZs BMW pulls up again, and as in the earlier scene, the DEETZs get out one by one. They all look sad, a little frightened. CHARLES is done up still in bandages, and limps slightly. They move slowly toward the house.

LYDIA hesitates to go up the steps. DELIA plows right on ahead.

EXT: FRONT PORCH - DAY

DELIA unlocking the front door.

DELIA
(Under her breath) Just wait.

INT: LIVING ROOM - DAY

They come in, look around, say nothing. All is quiet.

INT: KITCHEN - DAY

CHARLES comes in cautiously, stands in the middle of the room, and does a slow turn-around.

INT: BASEMENT - DAY

LYDIA stands at the bottom of the stairs. She hears a sharp CRACK, and her head whips that way. Nothing happens. Her face relaxes slightly.

INT: MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

DELIA unpacking CHARLES's suitcase and her own. CATHY walks by the open door, prowling the upstairs hallway.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

CATHY looking into all of the rooms. She hears a noise behind her and whips around. It's DELIA, leaning out of the bedroom.

DELIA
Do you see them?

CATHY
No. Mom listen, it wasn't Mr. and Mrs. Maitland. It was this other spirit, the one that turned into a canary. He was the one who --

DELIA
Try upstairs.

CATHY goes cautiously to the stairs that lead up to the attic. She pauses at the bottom and peers upward.

CATHY'S POV: STAIRS AND DOOR AT TOP.

They look ominous and dangerous. She starts upward.

INT: ATTIC ROOM - DAY

The door opens and CATHY peers in.

The room is empty. CATHY comes inside.

CATHY
I know you're here. I'm sorry about

what I said. I know you didn't want anybody to get hurt. I explained that to my family, and I think I convinced them. Sort of. That's why we came back.

She hears something and leaves off. She looks all around the room.

CATHY
Mr. and Mrs. Maitland? Where are you?

BETELGEUSE (v.o.)
They're dead.

CATHY
Who said that?

BETELGEUSE (v.o.)
I did.

CATHY peers into the model town. She sees a tiny figure standing on the roof of one of the buildings, wearing a dressing gown.

EXT: MODEL TOWN: BUILDING ROOF - DAY

BETELGEUSE looking very much as if he just dragged himself out of bed. In fact, one of the horned whores is sunbathing in the corner, and BETELGEUSE drapes a blanket over her so that CATHY doesn't see her. CATHY's face looms enormous in the sky.

BETELGEUSE
They're dead.

CATHY
Of course they're dead. They're ghosts.

BETELGEUSE
No, I mean they've gone. Decamped. Split. Vanished.

CATHY
Where'd they go?

BETELGEUSE
The Happy Hunting Ground.

CATHY

Are you a spirit too?

BETELGEUSE
Sort of.

CATHY
You're the one who caused all the trouble. You're the one who burned my father.

BETELGEUSE
Wasn't me. I've been trapped in this stupid burg for twenty years. All I want is to get out. So you got to help me.

CATHY
How?

BETELGEUSE
You say my name three times. That's all.

CATHY
I don't know what your name is.

This is a tricky one.

BETELGEUSE
I can't tell it to you. Do you know how to play charades?

CATHY
Yes.

BETELGEUSE
Then we'll play charades.

He holds up two fingers in a V.

CATHY
Two words.

BETELGEUSE holds up one finger.

CATHY (cont)
First word.

BETELGEUSE puts two fingers on his arm.

CATHY (cont)
Three syllables.

BETELGEUSE
No dummy. Two.

CATHY
Your fingers are so small I can't see them. First Word -- two syllables.

He points behind her.

CATHY
I don't know what that signal means.

BETELGEUSE
It means look behind you, Jerkoff.

CATHY looks behind her. A BEETLE the size of a Volkswagen is crouching in the corner of the room, its antennae reaching out towards her menacingly. CATHY yelps.

CATHY
Beetle!

BETELGEUSE
Good.

The beetle disappears. BETELGEUSE holds up two fingers.

CATHY
(Still shaken) Second word.

She's apprehensive about what horror is going to appear now. She jumps when a simple and non-threatening carton of orange juice materializes in the air over the model. The top opens and orange juice pours out into a glass that materializes as well.

CATHY
Orange? Juice?

The Orange Juice disappears. BETELGEUSE does the signal for "Now Put Them Together."

CATHY
Beetle Juice?

BETELGEUSE
That's it!

CATHY
Your name is Beetle Juice?

BETELGEUSE

It's spelled different, but basically... Now you said it twice, just one more time. And I'll be free.

CATHY

No.

BETELGEUSE

What?

CATHY

No, I'm not going to say your name three times. You haven't been down there twenty years. You were the evil spirit in this house. I know. Lydia has your picture on the head of the canary.

BETELGEUSE

You've got to say it!

CATHY

No I don't.

BETELGEUSE

How'd you like to have the biggest boobs in the world? Right now. I can do it.

CATHY

They'd look silly on me. I'm nine years old.

BETELGEUSE

How'd you like to be married to Michael Jackson? I can arrange it. Honeymoon in Rio. The whole schmear. I'll throw in Boy George as a bodyguard. Just say my name one more time.

CATHY shakes her head.

BETELGEUSE

How about twenty bucks?

CATHY hesitates.

CUT TO:

INT: DINING ROOM - NIGHT

It's evidently after dinner. The food's been cleared, but wine glasses, coffee cups, liqueurs remain. CHARLES, DELIA, EVELYN (CHARLES's ex-wife and book agent), and OTHO.

DELIA
Cathy says they're gone.

OTHO
(Shaking his head) No, they're still here. They're just not showing up. They go in and out.

CHARLES
In and out?

OTHO
Periods of relative strength, periods of relative weakness. Continuous generation of ectoplasm is a debilitating process, even under the best of circumstances.

EVELYN
They're probably ashamed of what they did.

DELIA
Not these people. And I don't care anyway. I just want to know how to get rid of them.

CHARLES
Otho, can you do it?

OTHO
Get rid of them? Yes. It's tricky, but I can do it. But I must warn you about what it will mean to them --

EVELYN
To the ghosts?

DELIA
I don't care about <u>them</u> --

OTHO
It will mean the dissolution of their souls.

CHARLES
You mean like no heaven, no hell --

OTHO
No nothing. Utter destruction.

CHARLES
They don't exist anyway.

DELIA
Do it.

INT: LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

LYDIA is sitting on the couch, poring over prints -- but also listening to the conversation in the dining room. Suddenly she whirls around.

INT: STAIRWAY TO SECOND FLOOR -- NIGHT

CATHY's standing there. By the expression on her face, she's heard too. She runs upstairs.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

CATHY runs down it frantically.

INT: STAIRCASE TO ATTIC -- NIGHT

CATHY pounds up it. At the landing at the top, she tries to open the door -- but it's locked. She frantically beats at it, pounds on it, calls out for BARBARA and ADAM. No response. In despair she turns -- and there are the ghosts. But they're pale, nearly transparent.

BARBARA
Shhh, darling! What's wrong?

CATHY
They're going to kill you.

ADAM
We're already dead.

CATHY
Otho is going to dissolve your souls.

BARBARA
That fat man downstairs? He can't do that.

CATHY
He says he can. If he dissolves your souls, you won't be here in this house anymore. You won't be anywhere. You won't even be <u>together</u>.

BARBARA and ADAM exchange glances.

BARBARA
You know we didn't mean to hurt anybody, don't you?

CATHY
Of course I know. I knew all the time. I was upset. I was -- can I say I'm sorry?

ADAM
You bet. And we're sorry too. Now go downstairs and see what you can find out.

CATHY nods and runs down the stairs -- straight through the ghosts.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

CATHY, running down from above, collides with OTHO who is on his way up. The rest of the family, and EVELYN, are arranged protectively behind him.

OTHO
Are they up there?

CATHY
No.

LYDIA
She's lying.

CHARLES
Don't protect these people, Cathy. Look what they did to me. Look what they did to you --

DELIA
They threw you out of a window, they wrecked the house --

OTHO

There is no truth in their mouths. Are they up there?

CATHY
(Beat) No.

DELIA
What do we do now?

OTHO
We trap them into showing themselves.

EVELYN
How do we do that?

OTHO
Bring me all your dental floss.

INT: ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

ADAM and BARBARA, still ghostly.

ADAM
She's a good kid. But she can't protect us.

BETELGEUSE (v.o.)
I can.

ADAM and BARBARA lean over the model and peer down.

BETELGEUSE is standing near the wreckage of the whorehouse, which is a smouldering ruin.

ADAM
Hey, what happened down there?

BETELGEUSE
Party last night got a little out of hand. Everybody got out safe, so it was fine. But like I say, guys, I can protect you. Just let me out of here.

BARBARA
I don't think that's a very good idea.

JUNO (v.o.)
No, it certainly wouldn't be.

JUNO suddenly appears behind them.

JUNO
Through a slight clerical error -- not mine, I assure you -- this is the wrong spirit. (Pointing a giant finger into BETELGEUSE's face) You were assigned something much milder. Please -- don't let this one out. We're sending someone tomorrow to pick him up. A Disposal Squad actually.

BETELGEUSE
I get an assignment, I like to do it right.

JUNO
(To BARBARA and ADAM) You'd hardly know it to look at him, but he's one of the most malicious spirits in the entire universe. Don't say his name aloud either. That's how he gets free.

BARBARA
We don't even know what his name is.

BETELGEUSE
Cathy does. Stupid name.

ADAM
In the meantime, what about that man downstairs? Can he really dissolve our souls? Separate us?

JUNO
(Hesitating)

BETELGEUSE
You bet your ass he can. I've seen it done. I've even done it.

JUNO
There seem to be certain functional loopholes --

BARBARA
We've been exposed to a few of them. How do we protect ourselves?

JUNO
(Stumped) This is a problem, isn't

it? Do you really trust that little girl?

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The DEETZs -- CHARLES, DELIA, and LYDIA and EVELYN are sitting silently in chairs and on the living room couch. LYDIA now and then is taking photographs, but everyone is quiet.

In the middle of the room, the carpet has been rolled back. OTHO -- despite his massive bulk -- is on his hands and knees. He has constructed a large pyramid of dental floss and nails. A square on the floor -- turned so that it appears diamond-shaped, and the apex of the pyramid at the ceiling.

EVELYN
I don't know, Otho. I just never heard that you could trap ghosts with ten-penny nails and dental floss.

OTHO
It's the <u>shape</u> that will trap them.

He's taken out a tape measure and is measuring the string to make sure that everything is even.

EVELYN
How do you get them <u>into</u> the trap? If it is a trap.

OTHO
How do you get anything into a trap?

DELIA
Bait?

OTHO smiles.

CATHY, who has been crouching in a corner all this time, listening, starts to creep away. OTHO suddenly turns in her direction.

OTHO
Get her!

CATHY runs, but LYDIA and DELIA bolt after her. CATHY makes it to the stairs and half-way up but DELIA springs, grabs CATHY's leg and drags her down.

DELIA
Oh darling, it's the only way. It won't hurt.

DELIA and LYDIA drag CATHY back into the living room.

DELIA
(To OTHO) It won't hurt her, will it?

OTHO shakes his head, and takes the child. CATHY tries to wriggle away. OTHO squeezes CATHY's arm tightly and holds her. CATHY tries to bite him, and he slaps her face. She's stunned.

CHARLES is shocked, and makes a move to protect his daughter. DELIA shakes her head.

DELIA
We have to get rid of those ghosts. Next time they attack, one of us might die. And I have no intention of being driven out of my house by a pair of earthbound interlopers. (To CATHY) It won't hurt you.

CATHY gives her family a single glance of pain and disbelief at their betrayal.

OTHO pushes CATHY into the open pyramid of dental floss.

Nothing happens. CATHY looks around. The family and EVELYN look around.

CHARLES
I knew it. Dental floss.

Suddenly, one of the sides of the triangle is filled in with colored light. Then a second side, the third and fourth together. CATHY is trapped inside, as if behind colored glass.

INSIDE OF PYRAMID

CATHY cannot see outside the triangular slants of light, even though her family can see in. She tries to push against one of the walls, but when she touches it a bolt of colored light flashes out blindingly, and burns a small patch of skin on her arm. The skin is blackened and smoking. CATHY cries out in terror.

BACK TO SCENE:

The family is lurching forward.

DELIA
What happened?

OTHO
Nothing. (Loudly, to CATHY) Don't touch the sides of the pyramid.

CHARLES
She was burned.

OTHO
No she wasn't. It's just static electricity. (Loudly, to CATHY) Say the words.

EVELYN
What words?

OTHO
Say the words, Cathy!

INSIDE THE PYRAMID:

CATHY is shaken and frightened.

CATHY
No! I won't say them!

OTHO (vo)
Say the words!

CATHY tries to resist, but she can't. She speaks the incantation despite herself.

CATHY
As sudden thunder / Pierces night;
As magic wonder / Mad affright
Rives asunder / Men's delight:
Our ghost, our corpse and we
Rise to be.

Vari-colored lighting bolts shoot from every corner of the pyramid, narrowly missing her. She spins and whirls and drops to the floor. The lightning bolts pass.

OTHO (vo)
Go on! Go on!

CATHY rises slowly to her feet, unable to resist -- and weeping because she cannot.

CATHY
As flies the lizard / Serpent fell;
As goblin vizard, / At the spell
Of pale wizard, / Sinks to hell;
The buried, dead, and slain
Rise again.

More lightning bolts. Several of these strike CATHY, and her clothing catches fire. She screams and shuts her eyes.

When she opens them again, she is no longer in the Pyramid alone. ADAM and BARBARA are with her. But they're corpses, truly risen from their graves.

They reach out for her, sadly.

CATHY screams again, and she turns around. One of the panels of colored light suddenly wavers, and becomes nearly transparent.

OTHO (vo)
Jump!

CATHY jumps through. There's a massive discharge of colored electricity, and CATHY is burned and singed, but she's free of the pyramid and safe.

BACK TO SCENE:

But no one is looking at CATHY. They're all staring into the pyramid, where the two corpses are rising to their feet.

The BARBARA CORPSE touches the wall of the pyramid, and bolts of electricity spring out. She's knocked backwards, and groans. Her bad arm falls off, and explodes in a shower of light and sparks.

More lightning bolts begin to flash, even without the corpses touching the walls of the pyramid. The two CORPSES are buffeted about, and are obviously in considerable physical pain.

OTHO is smiling.

OTHO
They're beginning to break up.

DELIA
How long will it take?

OTHO
Ten, fifteen minutes. Half an hour tops.

EVELYN
Are they suffering?

OTHO
They're already dead. They can't feel a thing.

Obviously not true. The BARBARA and ADAM CORPSES are crying out in their agony.

CATHY
Stop it!

OTHO
I can't. It's too late. And thanks for your help.

LYDIA
(To CATHY, matter-of-factly) How did you know what words to say?

CATHY is in terrible anguish, and she looks around the room. She sees her family, cold and uncaring. And she sees the two dissolving CORPSES in the Pyramid. With sudden resolution, CATHY runs upstairs.

DELIA
Cathy!

OTHO
It's all right. It's too late for her to stop the process.

INT: ATTIC - NIGHT

CATHY flings open the door of the attic room and then slams it behind her. She runs around the model, crying out:

CATHY
Where are you? Where are you?

EXT: MODEL TOWN GRAVEYARD -- NIGHT

BETELGEUSE with enormous black wings, like the figure of DEATH in the GOYA drawing, is perched atop the gravestone of ADAM and BARBARA MAITLAND. The graves beneath him are open. He's grinning.

CATHY's enormous hand reaches down for him.

BETELGEUSE
I see. You're ready for me now.

CATHY
Can you help them?

BETELGEUSE
For a price.

He grins.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The pyramid is now entirely zig-zagged on the inside with lightning. The DEETZs are watching the pain and the dissolution of the two CORPSES with mild interest. DELIA actually pours more coffee for herself. LYDIA is recording everything on videotape. CHARLES is in consultation with his ex-wife and agent about the book he's to get out of this. OTHO is sitting on the couch with one leg crossed over another, directing LYDIA's camera movements.

INT: INTERIOR OF THE PYRAMID

The corpses are starting to dissolve.

EXT: MODEL GRAVEYARD -- NIGHT

BETELGEUSE still on the grave, but his enormous wings are flapping expectantly.

BETELGEUSE

Do you accept? No going back, you know.

INT: ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

Just CATHY.

CATHY
(Very quietly) I accept.

BETELGEUSE (v.o.)
Then say it.

CATHY
Beetle Juice.

EXT: MODEL GRAVEYARD -- NIGHT

BETELGEUSE is grinning. He's also doubled in size. The tombstone crumbles beneath him.

CATHY (v.o.)
(Louder) Beetle Juice.

He doubles in size again. Behind him, one of the model buildings bursts into flame.

INT: ATTIC ROOM -- NIGHT

CATHY is looking at the model. Several of the buildings are already in flame. BETELGEUSE is much larger. He looks up at her.

BETELGEUSE
Once more.

CATHY
(After one moment's hesitation)
Beetle Juice.

There's a low rumble. The model town starts to shake as if an earthquake were hitting in.

EXT: MODEL TOWN -- NIGHT

Just as if the town were suffering an earthquake. Water lines break, buildings go up in flame, the earth splits open.

A very long, very large, and very massive tail -- like that

of a lizard or a dinosaur -- snakes down Main Street, doing more damage.

INT: ATTIC - NIGHT

CATHY is cowering in the corner. BETELGEUSE, now human-size, if not larger, stands in the center of the model town, like the incarnation of Satan. His leathery wings flap sullenly. His long pointed tail snaps viciously in the air.

His grin is malevolent and malicious.

CATHY creeps towards the door, to try to get out.

BETELGEUSE whips around in the midst of the destruction of the model Winter River, and his tail lashes out, whipping tightly around CATHY's neck. BETELGEUSE glances at her over his shoulder.

BETELGEUSE
A bargain is a bargain, kiddo.

INT: STAIRCASE TO ATTIC AND ATTIC DOOR -- NIGHT

Strange light around the door.

CATHY'S scream, suddenly broken off. Loud CRACK and THUMP.

INT: LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

The light show is still going on. ADAM and BARBARA CORPSES are twisting on the floor.

CHARLES
Did you hear something?

DELIA
I heard screaming. (Points at the pyramid; bored) Is this going to go on much longer?

OTHO
You want it done right?

A loud crash is heard upstairs, like a door smashed open.

CHARLES
That time I know I heard something.

DELIA

Cathy! Christ, what's she doing now!

LYDIA
She's possibly a little upset that you made her help to murder her friends.

DELIA
Why couldn't Cathy have imaginary playmates like every other maladjusted child? Why did she have to drag a bunch dead people into the house. Real dead people.

CHARLES
I'd better go up.

CHARLES starts up the stairs.

OTHO
Hurry back down. There should be some fireworks at the end.

CHARLES starts up the stairs. Another crash.

LYDIA
I don't think that's Cathy.

INSIDE THE PYRAMID:

ADAM and BARBARA'S CORPSES are at the end of their ropes. ADAM'S CORPSE has collapsed entirely. ADAM'S CORPSE's mouth opens and a small blue bird flutters out. BARBARA'S CORPSE stares at it a moment, and then collapses across her husband's chest. A second blue bird pushes its way out of her slack mouth. The corpses melt to puddles.

The birds flutter around the inside of the pyramid, as if seeking a way out.

BACK TO SCENE:

DELIA, LYDIA, EVELYN, and OTHO.

EVELYN
That's what the human soul looks like? A goddamn sparrow?

OTHO
Are we all ready?

He pulls a small revolver from the inside of his jacket

pocket.

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

CHARLES is walking cautiously along, opening the doors as he proceeds and peering into the rooms.

CHARLES
Cathy? Cathy, where are you? What was all that noise? Listen, you don't have to watch if you don't want to. Anyway, Otho says it's almost over. And it had to be done. Like cleaning squirrels out of the attic. That's all. Like getting bats out of the chimney. Cathy?

At the last door, he hears a noise inside the room -- like that of a child crying. He smiles a little smile of relief. He opens the door cautiously.

INT: THE LAST BEDROOM ON THE RIGHT - NIGHT

It's dark as CHARLES enters. The weeping is coming from the bed. CHARLES approaches the bed softly.

CHARLES
They were only ghosts, honey. Not real. They didn't really exist. And if they didn't really exist, Otho couldn't really kill them, could he? They --

He pulls back the covers. BETELGEUSE rises to the full height of Satanic majesty with a massive roar.

CUT TO:

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The four panels of the pyramid fade and disappear. The tenuous strings of the pyramid collapse, and the scul-birds are flying free in the room.

OTHO shoots at them with his pistols. There's madness in this medium's eyes.

EVELYN, DELIA, and LYDIA cower from the shots.

DELIA
Evelyn, stop him! He's crazy!

EVELYN
Otho! Stop! Stop!

LYDIA
Why do these things happen to me?
Oh my God...

The birds fly around, seeking to escape from the room.

CHARLES flies down the stairs. His face is a mask of fear. His clothes are in tatters.

CHARLES
Oh God, he's coming. He's coming.
He's --

BETELGEUSE
(His voice greatly amplified, as if the spirit were rising up out of hell itself) He's here.

BETELGEUSE suddenly crashes through the ceiling from the bedroom above. He's more massive and malevolent than before. His tail is longer. It lashes out and wraps around OTHO.

OTHO is picked up in the tail, swung around, and released -- smashed against the wall, and knocked unconscious.

BETELGEUSE grins maniacally and it looks as if he's about to eat them all. He looks down at the corpses of BARBARA and ADAM on the floor. Whatever is left of them shrivels and turns to dust. BETELGEUSE laughs. He reaches out first with one hand, and then with other -- easily grasping the two soul birds of ADAM and BARBARA.

His taloned hands form cages for the two birds. They beat frantically against his bar-like fingers.

A whirlwind starts to build up in the room. Small objects start to blow in a circle around him, then larger objects, then the furniture. DELIA, CHARLES, LYDIA, and OTHO are caught up in the whirlwind.

In the midst of it all, BETELGEUSE, laughing, intones:

BETELGEUSE
To-day is a thought, a fear is
to-morrow,
And yesterday is our sin and our
sorrow;
And life is a death. Dear ghosts,
so to die

Is to live -- and life is a worthless lie.
Then we weep for ourselves, and wish you goodbye.

His taloned hands close, and with a final chirp, the two soul-birds are seemingly crushed out of existence. BETELGEUSE grins and then disappears in an explosion of colored lightning and smoke.

CUT TO:

INT: LIVING ROOM: A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT

The room is a wreck of course, but there's something that suggests that the storm is over. The DEETZs, OTHO, and EVELYN begin to pick themselves up.

DELIA
Wasn't that a bit excessive, Otho?

OTHO
I warned you, exorcism can be a tricky business. When you're dealing with the dead, there are a great many variables.

EVELYN
I think that on the whole --

LYDIA
Where is Cathy?

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY -- NIGHT

A whirlwind's been through here too. DELIA, CHARLES, LYDIA, EVELYN, and OTHO prowling along the corridor, looking into the rooms. All of them calling for CATHY.

EVELYN
It was successful, wasn't it Otho? I mean after all that --

OTHO
Of course. This house is completely free of supernatural presences now.

CHARLES
I think we're also missing a couple of rooms.

DELIA

Where is she? I know she's pouting. We've just been through hell -- literally -- and Cathy's in a corner --

OTHO suddenly stops, with a puzzled expression on his face.

CHARLES
What is it?

DELIA
They came back, didn't they? Christ, I'm not going through that again. I mean --

OTHO
Cathy's in the attic.

There's something about his tone that alarms CHARLES. He hurries up the stairs, calling.

CHARLES
Cathy! Cathy!

DELIA looks at OTHO, and then runs after her husband.

EXT: MODEL OF WINTER RIVER -- NIGHT

The town is burning sullenly. Even the moon that shines above the town is a charring ball of wormy embers that casts a lurid red glow over the town.

INT: ATTIC -- NIGHT

The door is off its hinges. The room is in shambles. CATHY is sitting in the corner of the room, looking dazed.

CHARLES enters, looks around frightened, finally sees his daughter. He runs over to her, and snatches her up. She's limp.

DELIA runs in.

DELIA
Oh thank God, I thought --

CHARLES suddenly holds CATHY out from him. Her eyes are glazed, and her head lolls on her shoulders.

CHARLES
She's dead. Her neck is broken.

DELIA opens her mouth to scream. No sound comes out.

CHARLES
That thing broke her neck.

EXT: HOUSE -- DAY

A solitary moving van. Two movers silently bringing out furniture.

The BMW sits in the front yard. DELIA is sitting silently in the passenger's seat. CHARLES is standing in the open door on the driver's side.

DELIA
(Quietly) Tell her to hurry up.

CHARLES
(Calling) Lydia! Hurry up!

LYDIA comes out of the house, actually hurrying. She's not wearing cameras for once. She runs and gets in the car without saying a word. She slams the door and that's the last we see of her.

CHARLES immediately swings into the driver's seat, slams the door, turns on the ignition, and the car takes off with a screech.

The two movers look after them, shrug, and go back inside to continue their work.

Once they're inside, the house looks quiet and lonely. FREEZE FRAME and FADE TO BLACK & WHITE.

INT: JANE BUTTERFIELD'S ANTIQUES / TRAVEL / REAL ESTATE

After a moment the camera pulls back on the FREEZE FRAME and we find it's a photograph of the house, on the real estate board in JANE's office, with a description of the house just below, and the legend: FIXER-UPPER'S SPECIAL.

JANE is on the telephone with a travel client, the LITTLE XEROX GIRL is still on the xerox machine, and the bell rings when a customer walks in the door.

The customer is JUNO, made up to look like Greta Garbo incognito: raincoat, slouch hat, dark glasses.

JANE

Be with you in a moment.

JUNO
Just looking.

JUNO makes a desultory round of the antiques in the store, but then, as she's passing the real estate board, she surreptitiously removes the photograph of the house.

The LITTLE XEROX GIRL sees this, and is about to protest, but JUNO shakes her head warningly no. The LITTLE XEROX GIRL shrugs and returns to her machine.

JUNO waves politely to JANE, as she leaves the shop.

JUNO
Thanks.

JANE
Come again.

JUNO goes out the door.

EXT: MODEL TOWN: MAIN STREET -- DAY

Now we're in the model. The street is deserted as JUNO comes out of the shop. Two enormous faces are peering down at her: BARBARA and ADAM.

JUNO gives them the high sign.

BETELGEUSE (v.o.)
Hey! Juno!

JUNO turns slowly and goes up to the window of a ski shop. There in the window display, of a skier going down the side of a mountain, is BETELGEUSE. He's obviously trapped inside the display.

BETELGEUSE
This is no kind of thanks.

JUNO
You don't deserve any better.

BETELGEUSE
Those were great moves with the Soul-Birds. Those jerkoffs thought I'd really dissolved their souls for once and all. Sleight-of-hand. And I do a fabulous Satanic Majesty, don't you think?

JUNO
Passable.

BETELGEUSE
Hey, I scared those people out of the house, didn't I?

JUNO
You got them out of the house by murdering their daughter.

BETELGEUSE
Yeah, I know, it was naughty. But it was a bargain. The little girl agreed. Fair and square and all that shit. How long do I stay here?

JUNO
Till she forgives you.

BETELGEUSE
Who?

JUNO points into the sky. There are not only BARBARA and ADAM -- but CATHY, standing between them, and looking down.

INT: ATTIC ROOM -- DAY

ADAM, BARBARA, and CATHY are looking down at the model. JUNO is a tiny figure all alone on Main Street.

BARBARA
You shouldn't have done it.

CATHY
I know. It was a totally stupid thing to do. But Beetle Juice saved your souls.

ADAM
But you gave up your life.

CATHY
Well, yeah. But I made him promise that I could come back as a ghost and stay with you.

BARBARA
Really?

CATHY
Sure. I was holding all the cards. If I didn't say his name three times, he was never going to get out of here.

ADAM
What about your family?

CATHY
You're my family now. I never fit in. They were always telling me that. Now I feel like I do.

BARBARA
It's not that easy. When you grow up --

CATHY grins.

CATHY
I won't. That's part of the bargain.

ADAM and BARBARA shake their heads.

CATHY
See, that's what you people don't seem to realize. Things don't work the same after you're dead. Now if you had read that manual really carefully, you wouldn't have had so much trouble. This time we're going to work this business through right. I'll help. I'm good at manuals and that sort of thing...

We begin to fade out on CATHY's speech as the following images appear:

INT: UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

The doors of the various rooms are open. Just as it was when BARBARA and ADAM were alive.

INT: LIVING ROOM - DAY

Back in proper order, as it was before the DEETZs arrived.

EXT: HOUSE - DAY

Dilapidated, even falling apart. The FOR SALE sign is so weathered that the wording on it can hardly be made out.

END